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A TALE OF TWO TIMES: PREACHING IN THE LATTER AGE OF THE DHARMA[1]

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Summary

Sharing a cyclical cosmogony with other Indian worldviews, Buddhism is ordinarily thought to be unconcerned with specific historical events, looking instead towards the individual transcendence of temporal becoming as the goal of religious practice. One counterpoint to this prevailing attitude is the tradition of the decline of the dharma, premised upon the historical uniqueness or specificity of Śākyamuni's teachings and an attendant eschatological consciousness of temporal distance from the time of the teacher and his teachings. Interestingly, the *Lotus Sutra* presents both a transcendent and historically unique interpretation of Śākyamuni's lifetime. Nichiren, among others, attached importance to the historical specificity of Śākyamuni and his teachings, and hence understood the *Lotus Sutra* to demand attention to the preaching or evangelical spread of the true teachings.

I. Introduction

A. Linear and cyclical time

Long held assumptions dictate a fundamental difference between Western and Eastern notions of time and history: whereas the former are linear and finite, giving human history a particularistic reality and even urgency, the latter are cyclical and infinite, rendering human history, and hence human action — ethical action — within that history inconsequential. The Judaic messianic tradition and its Christian refiguration as eschatological promise/fulfillment are taken as superb examples of the linear orientation, premised as they are on one-time

[1] This paper was originally presented at the Third International Conference on the *Lotus Sutra* (Tokyo, 1997) and I am grateful to Geene Reeves and Jan Nattier for their comments; portions are also drawn from my forthcoming work on the decline of the dharma and developments in Chinese Buddhism.

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events that erupt into human history and change it (or end it) forever, teleologically and inevitably moving to a final perfection. This eschatological promise of final perfection is contrasted with a cyclical Indic cosmogony that renders the notion of a final end to world history meaningless, lost to the greater significance of cosmic repetition. In this vision there is no final end to history, no world telos, and, therefore, ultimately no progress at all. We should note that it is the fate of humanity *qua* society that is seen to be at stake here, with the Western, linear vision of time functioning as a theodicy that, based upon the belief in a perfected and final future, engenders as well the specifics of a forward-moving and historically specific soteriology through which it may be or must be effected. More importantly for our purposes, however, is the ethical importance attached to human action in such a "one chance only" view of history, an emphasis that is lacking in a transcendent or existential view of time. Thomas Altizer, for example, has been one of the strongest advocates of the need for a historical reading of Judeo/Christian eschatology, for in a spiritualization of the revolutionary impulse of that view of time "Jesus is detached from history and viewed as an 'existential' Word" and thereby "faith ceases to be rebellion and becomes, instead, either escape or submission" whereas "genuine Christian existence must be directed to a rebellious attack upon the 'realities' of profane existence, and it is to just this attack that Jesus' ethical message calls the disciple" (Altizer 1961: 102, 110-111).

B. The eternal return

The Indic approach, on the other hand, as Heinrich Zimmer characterized it decades ago, is exactly individual and transcendent rather than social and historical, leading to a "fundamentally skeptical attitude toward social progress." He writes,

> This viewpoint [of world history] from on high is not to be shared by the chorus of actors, by the gods and demons, engrossed by their roles, but is achieved through the supreme aloofness of the ascetic renunciation of Śiva, and through his attitude of spiritual indifference. To reach this perfection of his, is, among

> men, a privilege reserved for single, outstanding individuals, saints, ascetics, and yogin, who transcend the Māyā of phenomenal existence by their own efforts; but the world-process as a whole is not meant for a gradual progress toward perfection. It is the peculiar glory of Western idealism, with Christianity broadening into progressive humanitarianism, to have conceived such a goal, and to foster an ardent faith which embarks again and again, after each setback, on its quest for collective perfection (Zimmer: 168).

Perhaps the most well-known proponent of this contrast has been Mircea Eliade, whose comparative studies of cosmogony and eschatology led to his elaboration of the "Eternal Return," a primitive view of time and history characterized by cyclical accounts of the countless beginnings and ends of world time. To these "countless beginnings and ends" he contrasts an "innovation of the first importance," the Judeo-Christian doctrine of a singular beginning, linear progression, and a triumphal endtime which represents the forsaking of "the circular Time of the Eternal Return [to] become a linear and irreversible Time... [that] also represents the triumph of a Sacred History" (Eliade: 64-65).

On first reading one is tempted to simply identify the many 19th and early 20th century Euro-centric constructions that inform this understanding, including an evolutionary or teleological view of history/humankind with Christianity the developmental highpoint, an historical positivism or realism, and a somewhat facile Weber-esque view of the "East" as embodying an otherworldy form of asceticism that precludes finding meaning or value in worldly participation and social development. Still, and in spite of the many alternative readings that have been offered of this generalization (e.g., the myth of eternal return breeds equanimity and optimism not resignation and despair, Judeo-Christian eschatological thinking has also "suffered" a transcendental inversion, the postmodern West is likewise freed from historical positivism and linear history, etc.), by and large the general scheme of linear time and world-historical eschaton versus a cyclic cosmos and transcendent, ahistorical salvation, with its various nuances, has been upheld (King: 177, 181; O'Leary: 29-30). Altizer, for example, one of the few Christian theologians to give Buddhist

eschatological thinking serious and sympathetic consideration, concluded that even the Zen negation of "Buddhist trancendentalism... [that] fully parallels the radical Christian negation of transcendence" represents "a form of 'apocalypticism' in which nothing actually happens, in which there is neither world- nor self-transformation" (Altizer 1970: 229-230). Similarly, the Buddhologist Roger Corless has written that,

> History is an academic discipline that has developed in the western hemisphere. The western hemisphere has been strongly influenced by the Abrahamic traditions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) and their conception of time as something created by God in and through which God manifests himself. On this view, time is meaningful. It has a beginning and an end, and the end is a goal, so that there is development, a progressive achievement of the goal... History as a secular discipline has many of the features of the Abrahamic tradition's view of time... the assumption that time is meaningful and that development is real does not seem to have been given up by even the most radical critics of the philosophy of history. Buddhism, on the other hand, sees things as changing over time, but it does not see things as becoming more meaningful as they change. Change, for Buddhism, is a primary characteristic of cyclic existence (samsara), and history is just a lot of change. All that we can say about history, Buddhistically, is that as time goes on we get more of it (Corless: xix).

Buddhism is thus likewise seen to be concerned with individual liberation to a timeless truth in which sequential time is overshadowed by cyclical recurrence and the historical past by the predicted future appearance of the Buddha Maitreya, whose appearance is yet so many billions of aeons in the future as to render it meaningless in terms of current events. Thus Buddhists, following the cyclical model and lacking a world-historical eschaton, are seen to define the end of all things not as a consumation of world history but rather as individual liberation from it, as with Zimmer's Śiva. Winston King, for example, sums up this attitude in comparison with the "world-shattering events" of Western eschatologies, noting that Buddhism,

> points to the individual-existential situation as being more truly eschatological, i.e. as having to do with the *truly* ultimate [Nibbāna]... Nibbāna was essentially non- or super-historical, available limitedly in even the worst ages... It has *essentially* nothing to do with historical events but is human being face to face

with Ultimate Ineffable Being, a state that fully and finally transcends historical and cosmic event, and individual life and death (King: 182).

C. Specific time in Buddhist history

Leaving aside for the moment the validity of the overall generalization as well as the prescriptive evaluation of Zimmer and Eliade, we can of course find any number of traditions, persons, and historiographies within Buddhism that would seem to present, at the very least, minor counterpoints of concern for specific and social historicism to the overall theme of recurrance and individual transcendence if not a fully world-historical eschaton. The *Kālacakra* ("Wheel of Time"), Jien's *Gukanshō*, the dispensationalism inherent in the "Three Turnings of the Wheel," the various Buddhist national narratives, and other examples may be cited in this regard. Another such counterpoint is the Buddhist tradition of the decline and/or demise of its own teaching, a tradition that is often considered to parallel Judeo-Christian eschatological thinking. Indeed, the stories that relate these traditions, most of which are patently *ex-post facto* descriptions of actual events cast in the form of prophecies, evince a strong concern for specific history, linear timetables, the location of historical figures within those linear chronologies (usually as well a means of locating oneself within the same chronologies), and, most conspicuously, a great concern for the temporal relationship between the present time and the past time of the historical Buddha.

Unlike the cosmic and cyclical schemes of multiple, coexisting Buddhas the teaching of the decline of the dharma is concerned neither with recurring events nor grand visions of eternality but with the declining fortunes of the unique teachings of a singular historical figure brought about not by the inevitable and relentless progress of the cosmos but by specific *and avoidable* human failings, and, most interestingly, human failings of the Buddhist community. Rather than being dwarfed by the greater significance or ultimacy of the cosmic cycle, the individual's location in temporal relation to Śākyamuni, the Buddha of our historical time, thus takes on a special urgency. Hence

too successively distant ages were seen to require different "dispensations" of the dharma so as to accord with the times of the practitioner, an idea fundamental to the Pure Land tradition and one which renders temporal change important indeed. Concluding her overview of the many Buddhist traditions of its own decline, for example, Jan Nattier argued that, at least in these traditions, "the question of 'what time it is' has mattered, and at times has mattered very much, to a substantial proportion of Buddhist believers" (Nattier: 141). Indeed, Nattier has argued that the overall context of the decline tradition is analogous to that which inspired the prophets of the Hebrew bible, whose sharp social and religious critiques surely comprise one of the great sources of socio-ethical thinking.

D. The decline of the dharma in East Asian Buddhism

In East Asia, however, a curious change occurs: on the one hand, the a-historical, cosmological and cyclical traditions of innumerable Buddhas of the past, present, and future give rise to the imperative for historical change found in the messianic and apocalyptic Maitreya movements.[2] On the other hand, the more historical traditions of decline are refigured in such a way that the decline is understood to be existential rather than historical, and essential or constitutive of human experience rather than acquired and hence avoidable or alterable. Thus, perhaps representing the culmination of this trend, Shinran wrote in the thirteenth century that the decline of the dharma was a matter of existential reality for living beings in the age of the true dharma as well as the age of decline, and, more recently, the Kyoto School philosopher Tanabe Hajime discussed the decline of the dharma in terms of a "constitutive evil" of humanity; both require the saving power of the *dharmakāya*, a timeless and transcendent truth represented, notably, by the Buddha of Immeasurable Life. Although

[2] See, for example, Daniel L. Overmeyer, *Folk Buddhist Religion: Dissenting Sects in Late Traditional China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976) and Alan Sponberg and Helen Hardacre, eds. *Maitreya, The Future Buddha* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

this shift perhaps represents a return to what Winston King referred to as the "more truly eschatological" concern for the transcendence of the "individual-existential situation," a return to the "true" emphasis of the Buddhist tradition (similar to Zimmer's transcendent view of the Hindu tradition), it can also be seen as analogous to the transcendental inversion that Altizer has criticized in Christian eschatological thinking. If this is indeed the case, does this also validate the view of Buddhism as, in the end, unconcerned with linear time and world-historical eschatologies, and, by extension, contributing to that oft-noted lack of social and ethical consciousness in the Buddhist, especially East Asian Buddhist, traditions? And where does the *Lotus Sutra*, conspicuous in its emphasis on the cosmic and infinite yet also giving rise to some of the more socially activist Buddhist traditions, fit into this scheme? I believe that the answer to this question lies in its equal emphasis on the decline of the teachings of the historical Buddha, an emphasis expressed as an imperative to preserve and spread those teachings, in short, the imperative to preach, an important but little-studied aspect of the Buddhist tradition.[3] In order to better understand these issues, let me briefly outline the origins of the decline tradition before turning to the way in which this tradition was incorporated into the *Lotus Sutra*.

II. The true dharma and its decline

A. Not the transcendent truth that disappears

At many points within the Buddhist tradition we find a dynamic tension between the rhetoric of an unbounded, a-temporal truth (*dharmatā*) and the representation of that truth as the teachings of a historical person, and it is within the latter, that is, within Buddh-*ism*, the vicissitudes of the teachings in the world, that the tradition of the

[3] Some recent articles that deal with this topic include Mahinda Deegalle, "Buddhist preaching and Sinhala Religious Rhetoric: Medieval Buddhist Methods to Popularize Theravāda" in *Numen*, Vol. 44 (1997); Andrew Olendzki, "Mission and Dialogue: A Paradox?" in *Buddhist-Christian Studies*, Vol. 17 (1997).

true dharma (*saddharma*) and its decline takes shape. Thus we should note from the very beginning that it was never the dharma conceived as the causal uniformity of all things (*dhammatā*) that was believed to decline or disappear. As is well known, that will remain the same whether the tathagatas were to arise or not to arise (Woodward, Part II: 21). Hui-yuan (523-592), for example, lamenting the lot of the Buddhist church at the hands of Emperor Wu, states,

> This is the fate of our time... it is truly lamentable that we are unable to attend [the Buddha-dharma] at this time, but the truth of the Dharma cannot be vanquished! I ask that you virtuous ones please understand this and not be overly grieved (T #2060, 50.490c).

This is more important than has usually been recognized, for it directs our attention to the lived tradition of the teachings as the locus of the timeless, ahistorical truths that more often are the focus of doctrinal study. That is to say, rather than the essential truth of the dharma per se it highlights the importance of the teachings, and the spirited rivalry over who maintains the correct teachings are at the core of both the production of the decline traditions as well as their later sectarian use.

B. Origins of *saddharma*

1. Nikāya Buddhism

All religions that stem from the vision, charisma, and leadership authority of a historical founder face a turning point after he or she passes away and is no longer directly available to determine matters of doctrine and practice among the followers. Buddhism was no exception to this rule, particularly in light of the fact that Śākyamuni refused to appoint a successor, declaring instead that the dharma was to guide the community after his passing. Thus the years following Śākyamuni's passing saw any number of occasions on which questions of interpretation of dharma arose, quickly leading to codified versions of institutional rules and teachings, and the tradition also preserves stories of the various councils and other means whereby

the community sought to preserve those authoritative teachings. It is in this context of the time following the historical Buddha, then, that the question of preservation and interpretation becomes important, and it was quickly seen that, all other things considered, conservative literalism offered a formidable means of accurate preservation and propagation of the dharma. By "conservative literalism" I am referring to a resistance to change any portion of the accepted canon, including, as we shall see, the language and literary forms as well as the content.

In addition to councils and other forms of canon-creation, one of the means whereby the early Buddhist community attempted to secure this conservative literalism was through the rhetoric of the decline or even disappearance of the *saddhamma* (Skt. *saddharma*), the "true dhamma" or the "good dhamma." Although *saddhamma* can simply mean a good or auspicious thing (as, for example, in the "seven *saddhamma*" of faith, shame, appreciation of consequence, learning the teachings, vigor, mindfullness, and wisdom), in the context of the decline tradition throughout the Pali literature it is used to indicate the teachings that must be safeguarded and which will be lost without due diligence. In other words, *saddhamma* is used to refer to the authoritative teachings (*pariyatti*) in contradistinction to mis-interpretations, false attributions, mis-quotes, and other deviations from the proper and accurate transmission of the teaching, and it was argued that lack of attention to this proper transmission of the *saddhamma* would lead to its disappearance.

The *Aṅguttara-Nikāya*, for example, tells us that we must guard not only against those who would fabricate the word of the Buddha (*buddhavacana*) from whole cloth, that is, those who would claim "as utterances of the Tathāgata, what he never said or uttered, and he who denies what was said or uttered by the Tathāgata," but also against the one "who proclaims as already explained a discourse which needs explanation (*neyattha*), and he who proclaims as needing explanation a discourse already explained (*nītattha*)" (Woodward vol. 1: 54).[4]

[4] Cf. T #2, 592c-593a. Ron Davidson, in "Standards of Scriptural Authenticity" (*Chinese Buddhist Apocrypha* [Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1990], 294-97), notes that the complementary attitude is that the dharma is more than the literal words of the Śākyamuni Buddha, and encompasses all that is spoken from the vantage point of the truth per se (*dharmatā*) or that conduces to its realization, including the teaching of previous Buddhas as well as his enlightened disciples. Still, the tendency has been to try to validate teaching by somehow or another giving it the legitimacy of the more literal meaning of Buddhavacana (Robert A. McDermott, "Scripture as the Word of the Buddha," *Numen*, 31 [July 1984] 30-31; see also Davidson, 303-305).

Another *sutta* from the *Aṅguttara-Nikāya* that shows a concern for even literal orthodoxy warns against "the wrong expression of the letter (of the text) and wrong interpretation of the meaning of it," which would lead to the "confusion and disappearance" of the true dhamma, for "if the letter be wrongly expressed, the interpretation of the meaning is also wrong." On the other hand, "if the letter be rightly expressed, the interpretation of the meaning is also right" which leads to the "establishment, the non-confusion, to the non-disappearance of true Dhamma" (Woodward 1951, vol. 1: 53). Here we are clearly (and quite "literally") told that it is the *letter of the law* and not the spirit ("interpretation of the meaning") that is of central importance in the preservation of the *dhamma*.[5] The section on the confounding of the *saddhamma* from the *Aṅguttara-Nikāya* similarly warns that a careless attitude towards the hearing, mastering, contemplating, analyzing, and practicing the *dhamma* would lead to its disappearance (Hare vol. III: 132).[6] The order — hearing and mastering first and practice last — clearly indicates the priority of orthodoxy relative to orthopraxy. It is somewhat ironic, of course, that, as in the writings of the New Testament, the concern for accurate transmission of the true teachings actually indicates the existence of differing interpretations, differing visions, and no doubt differing transmissions. Although there are other traditions, doctrinal deviation and dissension within the sangha is by far the most conspicuous threat to the preservation of the *saddhamma* in the early texts; no doubt the

[5] The countervailing attitude is found in the Buddha's well-known injunction *against* formalizing the language of the dharma, preferring instead, for example, regional dialects (Davidson: 292-293).

[6] See also Hare: 180-181, 239-40; Woodward 1951, vol. IV: 49-50.

teachings of the emerging Mahayana were among those new teachings and interpretations targeted by the rhetoric of decline.

2. *Mahayana*

Just as the *nikāya* rhetoric of the decline of the dharma was really an exhortation to preserve the dharma and never meant to indicate that the teachings were actually gone, the Mahayana appropriation of that rhetoric remains fundamentally a rhetoric of doctrinal legitimacy; it functions not, however, by arguing that the decline can be staved off by hewing to a conservative orthodoxy but rather by claiming that its own doctrines are not only superior in truth value but uniquely efficacious in the "latter days" (*paścimakāla*) after the passing of the Buddha.[7] The first step to the eventual use of the decline motif as legitimizing a new "dispensation" of the dharma was the Mahayana transformation of the terms of its deployment. That is, while the Mahayana continued the strategy of claiming a literal form of orthodoxy (*buddhavacana*) for their traditions and texts (for example, the story of Nāgārjuna's recovery of the *Perfection of Wisdom* texts), they also re-figured the decline motif in such a way as to change its meaning from a time when the dharma would be gone or supplanted by false dharma to a time when its own superior dharma would not merely still be available, but, as proven precisely by its persistence, tested and certified in its superiority.

No doubt aware that the most common chronologies of decline described the time of their own activity and likely sensitive as well to the charge of creating "new" or "counterfeit" dharma, we find that one of the most prominent uses of the decline motif in the Mahayana is as a "proof metaphor" to stylistically indicate its own superior truth value in such a time. Self-conscious in its reaction to the conservative *nikāya* attempt to preserve the tradition, this strain is both highly

[7] It might be more accurate to say that the Mahayana texts, perhaps self-consciously, include a move to argue their legitimacy not only upon their literal claim to the status of *buddhavacana* but also upon their claim to better represent truth (*dharmatā*) per se.

specific ("*this* text is the *saddharma* and will be *uniquely* efficacious in such troubled times") at the same time it claims the high ground of the universal, hearkening more to the truth per se or *dharmatā* than its historical encapsulation — like the truth-body (*dharmakāya*) of the Buddha himself, the word of the Buddha is ever available to those who will but listen. The *Vajracchedikā*, for example, in speaking of the "the future time, in the latter age, in the latter period, in the latter five hundred years, when the True Dharma is in the process of decay"[8] exhibits little concern with such a period as a historical time of declining capacity: "Even at that time, Subhuti, there will be bodhisattvas who are gifted with good conduct, gifted with virtuous qualities, gifted with wisdom, and who, when these words of the Sutra are being taught, will understand their truth" (Nattier: 31, 57). The *Vajracchedikā* speaks of the "latter five-hundred years, when the True Dharma is in the process of decay" only as an opportunity to contrast its own continued efficacy. It thereby co-opted the *topoi* of the *nikāya* rhetoric, asserting its superiority based not simply on a claim to represent literal and historical orthodoxy (*buddhavacana*) but also on truth value and hence relevance even in a time of decay, a time for which the "Hinayana" had already prophesized their own lack of efficacy.[9]

[8] See also Nattier's discussion of the Sanskrit and Chinese variants of this phrase: 33-37, 91-94, 106 n. 111; other texts of the *Prajñāparāmīta* corpus which use substanially the same formula include *The Large Sutra on Perfect Wisdom* (trans. E. Conze, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), 328 (minus the reference to "the latter five-hundred years") and the *Suvikrāntavikrāmi-Paripṛcchā Prajñāpāramitā-Sūtra* (ed. by Ryusho Hikata, Kyoto: Rinsen Book Co., 1983), 124 (Chinese translation 565 by Upaśūnya, T #231, 8.231b).

[9] The *Pratyutpannabuddhasaṃmukhāvasthitasamādhi-sūtra* even claims that it will disappear *until* the latter period of decay (Paul Harrison, *The Samādhi of Direct Encounter* [Tokyo: The International Institute for Buddhist Studies, 1990], 96 ff)!

III. Transcendent and particular time in the Lotus

A. The Immeasurable duration of the True Dharma

The functional origins of the term *saddhamma* were not lost on the redactors of the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra*, a text which extols the most inclusive ideal of the Buddhist tradition at the same time that it is passionate in asserting its own status as the "true dharma" (*saddharma*) and "sole vehicle" (*ekayāna*). Similarly, the *Lotus* combines a distinctly cosmic and cyclical view of the universe with the same sort of specific and apologetic perspective found in the *Vajracchedikā*. The former outlook, that is, the perspective of the eternal return, is found in the many references to twenty minor kalpas of the True Dharma followed by twenty intermediate kalpas of the Semblance, or forty kalpas of each, or thirty-two kalpas of each, etc. and, of course, in the central teaching of the immeasurable lifetime of the Buddha.[10]

> O Mahāsthāmaprāpta, the life-span of the Buddha Bhiṣmagarjitasvararāja was as kalpas equal to forty myriads of *koṭis* of *nayutas* of sands of the Ganges River. The true Dharma abided for kalpas equal to the number of particles in Jambudvīpa. The derivative Dharma abided for kalpas equal to the number of particles in the four continents. After having benefited the sentient beings, the Buddha entered *parinirvāṇa*. After the extinction of the true and derivative Dharmas, there appeared in this land another Buddha who was also called Bhiṣmagarjitasvararāja,... In this way there appeared two myriads of *koṭis* of Buddhas one after another, all of whom had the same name (Kubo and Yuyama: 267-268).

Although not in the same place or even in the same context as its references to the two periods of True and Semblance, like the *Vajracchedikā* the *Lotus* also speaks of the time "after the Tathāgata's final nirvana, in the latter age, the latter period, the latter five-hundred years, when the True Dharma is in decay."[11] The Chinese translation

[10] E.g., T #262, 9.20c, 21a, 21c, 29c, *passim*.

[11] Skt: *tathāgatasya parinirvṛtasya paścime kāle paścime samaye paścimāyāṃ pancāśatyāṃ saddharma-vipralope vartamana*, from *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra*, edited by U. Wogihara and C. Tsuchida (Tokyo: Sankibō Book Store, 1958), 241.

by Kumarajiva even uses the term "*mo fa*" or "final dharma," possibly the first occurrence of the term.[12]

Given the use of the two periods of the dharma and the presence of decline motif, many are tempted to see the *Lotus Sutra* as a primary source for the tripartite schema of decline that became so influential in Japan (that is, the three periods of the True Dharma, Semblance Dharma, and Final Dharma). Although, as discussed below, I do think that it contributed greatly to the "hermeneutics of orthodoxy" so much a part of the decline traditions, we need to be very careful in assessing its contributions to the chronological orderings of decline. That is, its usage of the two periods of the dharma are more likely drawing on the cosmological traditions than the *topos* of decline, which explains why the settings in which the periods of the True Dharma and the Semblance Dharma appear are so exaggerated (myriads of millions of kalpas, kalpas equal to the number of atoms in the continent of Jambudvīpa, etc.). Thus too the cyclical nature of these descriptions, in which, after the two periods of a Buddha's dharma, a Buddha of the same name will appear, as many as "twenty hundred thousand myriad's of kotis of Buddhas," of the same name.[13] Finally, and most telling, none of these cyclical descriptions are of the duration of the historical Buddha's dharma, whereas the instances of the decline motif are typically represented as the decline of Śākyaṃuni's dharma (Nattier: 85-86).

Further, although the *Lotus* presents a clear two period scheme in which the Semblance Dharma follows and is, at least chronologically, distinct from the period of *saddharma*, which is also chronologically distinct from the lifetime of the various tathagatas (which, interestingly, adds up to "three periods of the dharma"), there is no sense here of a qualitative difference between the periods. The *Lotus Sutra* does not speak of the two periods in terms of decay or sequential loss of capacity, rather, as Nattier has shown, this use of the Semblance Dharma indicates precisely that period after the death of the Buddha

[12] T #262, 9.37c.

[13] E.g., T #262, 9.50c.

when his teachings *were* available, hence "it refers to the real and ongoing presence of the *saddharma*" (Nattier: 86). But even this is not the real point of this *topos*: the two periods of the dharma as described in the *Lotus Sutra* are rather related to the grand cosmic drama of the Buddha's immeasurable lifetime, the basic theme of the sutra, and not the theme of decline.[14] In a manner typical of Indian rhetorical style, the *Lotus* bolsters this drama with incomprehensible numbers (such as "immeasurable, innumerable thousands of myriads of millions of kalpas"). Given that the periods of True Dharma and Semblance Dharma (*saddharmapratirūpaka*) are not used in the same part of the text or same context with the "latter 500 years" when the True Dharma is in decay(*saddharma-vipralopa*) it is not unreasonable to assume that we have two entirely different strands of the tradition coming together in the same text. Aside from the textual evidence that the two represent different *topoi*, there is also a rather glaring doctrinal inconsistency in the notion of a period of the destruction of the dharma following the Buddha's extinction or final nirvana, given the *Lotus Sutra*'s insistence that his final nirvana was but a fiction and his lifetime in fact is immeasurable. We can thus conclude that the trope of the two periods represents the eternal return or the transcendent view, whereas the decline motif represents a concern for linear and unique history. What, then, is the practical thrust of that concern for linear and specific history?

B. The destruction of the True Dharma: *Saddharma-vipralopa*

Although the *Lotus* never became a major source in the early Chinese development of the decline tradition, it *is* filled with reference to decay, the "latter 500 years," and the like in the context of doctrinal persecution, concern for teaching and conversion, and a polemic

[14] Even in China it seems that the settings and descriptions of the two periods in the *Lotus* are much too far beyond a sense of history to inculcate any sense of historical or social foreboding, as the *Lotus* is not mentioned in the standard lists and encyclopedias of decline texts such as the *Fa yüan chu lin*, which lists over fifteen references to the decline but makes no mention of the *Lotus* (T #2122, 53.1005 ff).

assertiveness about its own message, and it is in this that I believe we can see the significance of its use of the decline motif. Of course, the most obvious example of this is the co-opting of *saddharma* for the title of the text itself (Hubbard, 1995: 124-125). That is, much like the *Vajracchedikā*, the *Lotus* uses the theme of the decline not in order to wail and bemoan the sad fate of the true dharma but rather as an opportunity to assert the importance of the *hearkening* to true dharma (albeit redefined), particularly in such a period. Thus, according to the text, due to the power of the sutra itself there will still be those who will gain innumerable merits and enter into nirvana if they but receive, hold, preserve, and transmit it.[15] In this way, and as with the earlier traditions, the rhetoric of decline is deployed in the *Lotus* not to condemn moral decay but rather to assert its own importance. Indeed, if we examine the specific instances in which this trope occurs, we find that virtually *all* references that make use of the terms of the decline tradition (i.e., the "age of decay," "evil age," "five defilements," "latter five-hundred years," "latter age after Śākyamuni's *parinirvāṇa*," and the like) are accompanied by some sort of declaration of the continued efficacy of the *Lotus*, a vow to spread and teach it even in such a period, the abuse that its defenders can expect to face in such a period, the merit that will accrue from teaching it, etc.[16] Broadly speaking this rhetorical context can be divided into three types, though there is considerable overlap among them: 1) the merit of preserving the *Lotus Sutra* in the latter age and the virtues of those who do so; 2) how to preach the *Lotus Sutra* in the latter age; and 3) the faults of those who reject the *Lotus Sutra* in the latter age, typically mixed with the merits of accepting it. It is also interesting that those portions of the *Lotus* generally thought to

[15] E.g., T #262, 9.10b (Chapter 2), 31a (Chapter 10), 38c (Chapter 14), etc. See Jan Nattier, "The *Candragarbha-sūtra* in Central and East Asia" (Ph.D. thesis, Harvard University, 1988), Appendix 2 for a complete list of all references to the "latter age" in the various versions of the *Lotus*.

[16] Similarly, in the *Mahāparivirvāṇa-sūtra* use of a seven-hundred year timetable of decay, "Though certain moral failings (especially on the part of the monks) are mentioned, issues of doctrine are given greater attention" (Nattier, p. 39).

be the earliest (i.e., chapters 2-9) contain no references to the decline, which predominate in the middle layer, suggesting that the decline trope was added during the process of expansion as a means of encouraging those who had come under fire for preaching the original text.[17] This fits in well with my thesis that the central message of the decline trope is the preaching of the dharma, for as Shiori Ryōdō notes, the dominant theme of the middle layer of the *Lotus* (where we find the majority of references to the decline) is to "emphasize the command to propagate the *Lotus Sutra* in society as opposed to the predictions given in [the earlier chapters of] the future attainment of buddhahood by the disciples."[18] Let us look briefly at some examples of each category, and then consider the effect that this had on Nichiren, perhaps the most famous disciple of the *Lotus Sutra* and one who certainly took seriously its message of decline and the attendant need to preach its truth.

1. Virtues of preserving the *saddharma* in the latter, evil age[19]

Know that anyone who preserves the *Lotus Sutra*
Is an ambassador of the Buddha
Who feels compassion for sentient beings.
Those who preserve the *Lotus Sutra*
Were born here in this world,
Withholding themselves from the pure land
Out of their compassion for sentient beings.
Know that such people are born
Where and when they will.
They are born in this evil age

[17] I am indebted to Jan Nattier for pointing this out to me.

[18] Shiori Ryōdō, "The Meaning of the Formation and Structure of the *Lotus Sutra*," in George J. Tanabe, Jr. and Willa Jane Tanabe, eds. *The Lotus Sutra in Japanese Culture* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989), 31.

[19] For further examples of the virtue of preserving the true dharma see also T #262, 9.31a (Chapter 10), 34a (Chapter 11), 37a (Chapter 14), 37c-38a (Chapter 14), 38b (Chapter 14), 39c (Chapter 14), 46a (Chapter 17), 51b (Chapter 20), 54b (Chapter 23), 61b (Chapter 20), and 62a (Chapter 18).

To extensively expound the highest Dharma.
Such expounders of the Dharma should be revered
With offerings of divine flowers, perfumes,
Heavenly jeweled clothing and exquisite celestial jewels.
Those who preserve the Sutra
In the evil age after my *parinirvāṇa*,
Should be paid homage with palms pressed together—
Just as one pays homage to the Bhagavat.

T #262, 9. 31a (Chapter 10); Kubo and Yuyama: 161-162

Bhagavat! If there are those who preserve this Sutra in the corrupt and evil age of the latter five hundred years, I will protect them and rid them of their heavy cares, make them attain happiness and allow no one to strike at them through their weaknesses.

T #262, 9.61a (Chapter 28); Kubo and Yuyama: 321

2. Teaching the *saddharma* in the latter age[20]

After my passing into *parinirvāṇa*, during the latter five-hundred years, you must spread it far and wide on the Jambudvīpa Continent and not allow it to be destroyed... you should protect this Sutra with your transcendent power. Why is this? Because this Sutra is good medicine for the ills of the people on this Jambudvīpa Continent.

T #262, 9.54c (Chapter 23); Kubo and Yuyama: 289

3. Rejecting the *saddharma* in the latter age[21]

If in the latter age there is anyone
Who preserves this Sutra,
I will dispatch him to the world of humans
To carry out the Tathāgata's task.
If throughout one entire kalpa

[20] For further examples of the exhortation to spread the true dharma in the latter age see also T #262, 9.37b (Chapter 14), 37c (Chapter 14), 38b (Chapter 14), 38c (Chapter 14), 39a (Chapter 14), and 51b (Chapter 20).

[21] For further examples of the retribution for rejection the *Lotus* in the latter age see also T #262, 9.10b (Chapter 2), 36b (Chapter 13), 36c (Chapter 13), and 62a (Chapter 28).

There is anyone with erring thoughts
Who always disparages the Buddha
With an angry complexion, the consequences of
His grave errors will be incalculable.
If there is anyone who speaks
A hostile word even for an instant
About those who recite and preserve this *Lotus Sutra*,
His fault will be even greater.

T #262, 9.31a-b (Chapter 10); Kubo and Yuyama: 162

In the evil age of the corrupt kalpa
There are many fearful things.
People possessed by evil spirits
Will scorn and slander us.
But we shall wear the armor of patience
Because we trust and revere the Buddha;
And we will persevere under these difficulties
In order to teach the Sutra.

T #262, 9.36c (Chapter 3); Kubo and Yuyama: 193

Clearly, then, the primary use of the decline motif in the *Lotus Sutra* is to argue for the need to preserve and spread its message, that is, an exhortation to the preacher of the *Lotus*. The evil, latter age is not, of course, the only context in which upholding and teaching the *Lotus Sutra* is extolled — indeed, this is one of the major themes of the scripture. As I have earlier argued, "This reminds us that, together with Christianity and Islam, Buddhism is a missionary religion, and the role of the preacher as missionary [*dharmabhāṇaka*] is indeed forcefully argued throughout the *Lotus Sutra*. Thus, too, we should remember that... the primary function of *upāya* is discovered in the *preaching* activity of the bodhisattvas," that is to say, offering the gift of the dharma (Hubbard 1995: 127). Given the earlier use of the decline motif to argue for a more conservative orthodoxy, its re-deployment to justify the new dispensation of the *Lotus* must represent a deliberate strategy of accommodation.

IV. The evangelist Nichiren

Nichiren was one who clearly embraced the import of the *Lotus Sutra's* combination of the rhetoric of decline with the mission and virtue of preaching the true dharma. That is, although the *Lotus Sutra*, as with Mahayana scriptures in general, may have appropriated the tradition of the decline in order to assert their own orthodoxy or truth value in such an age, for those like Nichiren who came to believe that they were actually living in the predicted age of the final dharma (as the latter age had come to be understood, Chin. *mo-fa*, Jap. *mappō*), the issue was more pressing, and on this issue the *Lotus* is forceful: during the period of the latter dharma the practical imperative is none other than that of the *dharmabhāṇaka*, the preacher of the dharma, specifically the preacher of the true dharma of the *Lotus Sutra*. For Nichiren, the logic was easy: the supreme practice of the Mahayana generally is that of the bodhisattva, and the supreme gift of the bodhisattva is the gift of the teachings, the gift of the dharma. By Nichiren's time, however, there were many interpretations of the dharma contending for the place of *saddharma*. As Jackie Stone has put it, "Nichiren's search for a teaching valid in the *mappō* era stemmed from a desire for objective truth. Contention among rival Buddhist sects — exemplifying the *Ta-chi-ching's* prediction of an age when 'quarrels and disputes will arise among the adherents to my teachings'... awoke in him a resolve to discover which, among the so-called 'eighty-thousand teachings,' represented the Buddha's true intention and could benefit people in the last age... Eventually he concluded that the Lotus Sutra, and none other, represented the pinnacle of Shakyamuni's teachings" (Stone, 44).

Envisioning himself to be doing the work of Viśiṣṭacārita, leader of the bodhisattvas that spring up from the earth to take charge of "extensively teaching" the *Lotus* after Śākyamuni's final nirvana, Nichiren took personally the commission to propagate the *Lotus* during the latter days of the dharma. In view of the historical specificity of the decline tradition, it is also significant that Nichiren understood that it was because the bodhisattvas from under the earth had been personal

disciples of Śākyamuni in the past that he entrusted the propagation of the *Lotus* to them in the latter age and turned down the request of the numerous other bodhisattvas (Watson: 174). So too his stress on the historical Buddha as the refuge for this age rather than Amida or other cosmic Buddhas. His sense of the importance of the specific, linear time in the development of Buddhism is also clearly seen in the *Senji Shō*, "The Selection on Time," in which he narrates the history of Buddhism from Śākyamuni to his own day in the context of the decline of the dharma. As he writes in the opening sentence, "One who wishes to study the teachings of Buddhism must first learn to understand the time" (Watson: 183). His conclusion, of course, is that in the latter age of the final dharma the propagation of the *Lotus Sutra* was the supreme path, albeit a difficult path. Nonetheless, and for Nichiren this was the important message of the *Lotus*, to give the gift of the dharma and establish sentient beings in truth is the ethical imperative at the core of the true dharma, even if it means abuse and vilification:

> I am fully aware that if I do not speak out, I will be lacking in compassion. I have considered which course to take in the light of the teachings of the Lotus and Nirvana sutras. If I remain silent, I may escape harm in this lifetime, but in my next life I will most certainly fall into the hell of incessant suffering. If I speak out, I am fully aware that I will have to contend with the three obstacles and the four devils. But of these two courses, surely the latter is the one to choose... Persons like myself who are of paltry strength might still be able to lift Mount Sumeru and toss it about; persons like myself who are lacking in spiritual powers might still shoulder a load of dry grass and yet remain unburned in the fire at the end of the kalpa of decline; and persons like myself who are without wisdom might still read and memorize as many sutras there are sands in the Ganges. But such acts are not difficult, we are told, when compared to the difficulty of embracing even one phrase or verse of the Lotus Sutra in the Latter Day of the Law. Nevertheless, I vowed to summon up a powerful and unconquerable desire for the salvation of all beings, and never to falter in my efforts. (Watson: 79).

For Nichiren, the advent of the latter age or the *final* dharma meant none other than a re-doubled effort to disseminate the *true* dharma, and he saw this mission precisely as the ethic of the bodhisattva, the mandate to save all beings through the gift of the truth. In this, I believe, he was accurately reflecting the historical specificity of the decline motif, both in its original form as a polemic of orthodoxy and in the manner that it was employed within the *Lotus Sutra* as an injunction to preach the true dharma.

V. Conclusion

I have discussed the decline of the dharma in the *Lotus Sutra* as intimately related to what I consider to be one of the main themes of the *Lotus*, the propagation of the dharma and the missionary activity of the preacher of the dharma, the *dharmabhāṇika*. I have also tried to give a more general context for this discussion by contrasting a linear sense of time fraught with unique historical meaning with a more cosmic cycle of eternally recurring events, and have touched briefly on the ethical import typically ascribed to each. In this context the decline of the dharma is seen to be an example of a linear "eschatology" in which great concern is given to the specific history of Śākyamuni's teachings and their continued existence in the world. In neither the early use of this tradition nor in its later Mahayana incarnation was it ever taught that the dharma was really gone, rather the decline was always used to exhort fidelity to a particular version of the true dharma. This theme is well represented in the *Lotus Sutra*, in which virtually every instance of the decline motif is accompanied by a reference to the True Dharma, the merits of upholding and propagating it, how to teach it, or the dangers of ignoring or slandering it. In these instances the True Dharma is not understood as transcendent truth but rather the specific truth of the *Lotus Sutra*.[22] The cosmic, cyclical scheme of numerous Buddhas existing in numerous worlds,

[22] The same specificity of the *Lotus* is seen its use of *upāya*, in which the *Lotus* itself is never considered *upāya*, but rather the unsurpassed truth; this is quite different from the more thorough-going use of *upāya* in, for example, the *Vimalakīrti-sūtra*, in which the doctrine of nonduality renders all utterances of the Buddhas equally provisional and equally *upāya*; ultimately, of course, this leads to the "thunderous silence of Vimalakīrti" as the only possible "statement" of nonduality; cf. Hubbard 1995: 124.

appearing in countless and eternal succession, is also found in the *Lotus*, replete with reference to different periods of their dharma, and is thus often seen as related to the decline of the dharma, especially in the form of the three periods of the dharma (true, semblance, and final). However, the cyclical trope in which the two periods appear in the *Lotus* has been shown to be thematically and textually unrelated to the linear progression of the decline motif. I have also suggested that Nichiren read the decline theme of the *Lotus* not in terms of this theme of eternal return, but took the point of the rhetoric of the decline of the dharma to be specific and historical, to be in fact an exhortation to the accurate preservation and transmission of the true dharma, and to that end he worked tirelessly throughout his life. Nichiren was, no doubt, an evangelist: a person whose profound encounter with the message of truth in the *Lotus Sutra* converted him to a messenger seeking to bring the good news to all humanity. This tradition, then, is one in which a transcendent approach to time is thoroughly mediated by a concern for unique and specific history and individuals. More generally we could perhaps also say that it is this more linear sense of time, closely tied to the declining fortunes of the teachings of a particular human being and the difficulties that await those who would disseminate his teachings, that inspired Nichiren to make the link between the troubles of the predicted last times, his evangelical mission to establish the true teachings, and the peace and prosperity of the nation (*risshō ankoku* 立正安國). That is to say that for Nichiren the ethical imperative of the bodhisattva in the latter age, the imperative to preach the true dharma, was linked to social concord as well. The vicissitudes of Nichiren's attempts to establish a peaceful nation are well known, as is the fact that in the late twentieth century it is mostly Nichiren-based movements that lead Japanese Buddhist organizations in any sort of social activism and international peace activities — groups such as the Risshō Kōseikai, Nipponzan Myohoji, and Soka Gakkai.[23] Finally, then, we could ask if this drive to social

[23] For a study of the relationship between the ideas of peace, individual moral cultivation, and national mission in Japanese new religious movements see Kisala 1996.

activism on the part of contemporary Nichiren-derived movements is in any part due to the fact that Nichiren himself drew his evangelical inspiration not from the cosmic and cyclical sense of time in the *Lotus Sutra*, the time of "eternal return," but rather from the linear sense of time and distance from the founder equally found in the *Lotus Sutra*. The answer to this question, however, must await yet another time.

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PHENOMENOLOGY, SOCIOLOGY, AND HISTORY OF THE NEW AGE

JULIA IWERSEN

Review article

HORST STENGER, *Die soziale Konstruktion okkulter Wirklichkeit: eine Soziologie des "New Age"*. Opladen: Leske and Budrich, 1993, 264 p., ISBN 3-8100-1035-9.

JAMES R. LEWIS and J. GORDON MELTON (Eds.), *Perspectives on the New Age*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1992, 369 p., ISBN 0791-4214-8 (pbk.).

CHRISTOPH BOCHINGER, *"New Age" und moderne Religion*. Gütersloh: Christians Verlag/Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1994, 695 p., ISBN 3-579-00299-6.

MICHAEL YORK, *The Emerging Network: A Sociology of the New Age and Neo-Pagan Movements*. Rowman and Littlefield, 1995, 372 p., ISBN 08476-8000-2 (cloth).

PAUL HEELAS, *The New Age Movement: the Celebration of the Self and the Sacralization of Modernity*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1996, 266 p., ISBN 06311-9332-4 (pbk.).

WOUTER HANEGRAAFF, *New Age Religion and Western Culture. Esotericism in the Mirror of Secular Thought*. Studies in the History of Religions (NUMEN Book Series), 72. Leiden, New York, Köln: E.J. Brill, 1996, 580 p., ISBN 90-04-10695-2 (cloth).

Between 1993 and 1996, five substantial monographs have appeared on the phenomenon of the New Age. These five monographs vary in their approach and even more so in their attitude toward New Age as a religion; however, a study of them reveals that basically two distinct approaches emerge: a sociological approach that examines how the conditions of the (post-)modern Western world both frames and influences the ways in which New Age thought is itself structured and organized; and a historical and cultural approach that locates elements of New Age in even earlier traditions

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THE POLITICS OF PURE LAND BUDDHISM IN INDIA

GALEN AMSTUTZ

Summary

Pure Land Buddhism achieved its primary influence in East Asia because it supplied a nonmonastic, autonomous source of religious authority and practice to middle elites in those cultural regions. In contrast Pure Land failed to achieve any success in India. The explanation for the marginalization of Indian Pure Land is probably sociopolitical: Pure Land teachings tended to bypass not only the authority of the Hindu brahmins, but even the authority of Buddhist renunciate orders. Indian social history did not produce any significant middle elites concerned with such non-gurucentric religious authority. As a result, Buddhist India did not produce any innovations in the upâya of religious institutionalization in Buddhism.

The Politics of Pure Land Buddhism in India

In the last millenium the most widespread form of Buddhist mythos in East Asia has been Pure Land Buddhism. Although this fact has irritated western-oriented Buddhological scholarship, Pure Land was a natural development of an Indian religious environment.

The Nature of "Devotional" Pure Land

Buddhism began with an ancient Indian śramaṇa model sharply defined by the myth of Śâkyamuni. The tendency towards the mythic hegemony of monasticism in Buddhism—which applies as much to Mahâyâna traditions as to early (Nikâya) traditions—was fundamental. Nevertheless, as the Buddhist tradition began to diversify in the Mahâyâna movement, one of the first variations was the teaching about the Pure Land.

As written artifacts, the two principal Indian Pure Land sûtras presenting this story appear to be part of the Ratnakûta collection, the

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earliest Mahâyâna literature in India.[1] The texts which were afterwards central in the East Asian Buddhist tradition included the Wu-liang-shou ching (The Larger Sukhâvatî-vyûha, T 360 and others) and the A-mi-t'o ching (Smaller Sukhâvatî-[amṛta]vyûha, or Amitâbha-vyûha, T 366). A third work which became standard in East Asia, the Kuan wu-liang shou-fo ching (Kuan-ching) (T 365), was composed either in Central Asia or China but is consistent with Indian treatments of the Sukhâvatî-vyûha mythos.[2] A fourth work, the Pratyutpanna-sûtra, was also contemporaneous and concerned meditations on the Amitâbha Buddha.

The original Amitâbha sûtras were composed around 100 CE during the Kushan regime in northwest India (perhaps Bactria or the Kabul valley) in Gandhârî, a Prâkrit language of northwest India and central Asia which was in use from about 300 BCE to 300 CE.[3] The Pure Land narrative which survived from this period to spread into East Asia, especially the description of the Pure Land realm itself, was probably the product of a deliberate compositional effort to assemble the most interesting and persuasive motifs from Buddhist, Hindu, Greek and Iranian sources to arrive at the most superior possible vision of a "paradise." The idea of the Amitâbha Pure Land was probably "ingeniously, and with great care, invented" by Pure Land followers using mythic ideas including the cakravartin (great king turning the wheel of dharma), Uttarakuru (Buddhist cosmological geography), devalokas (realms of the gods) and stûpas, with the elements of material imagery symbolizing religious enlightenment.[4]

The principal sûtras were only a part of a larger field of Pure Land imagination which included a number of writings and a number of other bodhisattvas who were identified with the past lives of Amitâbha. References to Amitâbha's Pure Land and recommendations about rebirth there as a goal are found in a variety of texts even where Pure Land is not the main object of attention. Amitâbha turns up in over one-third of the translations of Indian Mahâyâna texts in the Chinese canon, a total that comes to more than 270 pieces.[5] A generic concept of Sukhâvatî was widespread.[6] On the surface, such literary evidence suggests that Pure Land myth had been integrated

into early Indian Mahâyâna practice and cult organization by 200 CE,[7] although the exact sources, conditions and extent of the original Amitâbha cultus are unclear.[8]

Although it has been held that Pure Land represented a pseudo-Buddhist reflection of some kind of Indo-Iranian theism,[9] Pure Land was definitely a product of Buddhism, especially of the ancient ideas of the bodhisattva and the vows of the bodhisattva or Buddha. The ultimate aim of all Pure Land teaching was the eventual attainment of Buddhist nirvâna, not the transitional rebirth in a paradise.[10] Pure Land developed logically in Mahâyâna literature in India. Stage one seems to have involved the idea, which emerged soon after the death of Śâkyamuni, that many other Buddhas had existed in the past; this soon became linked to the idea of future Buddhas. The appearance of these past and future Buddhas on the mythic stage universalized and made more flexible the idea of enlightenment. Stage two followed when, mostly as part of the Mahâyâna movement, Buddhist cosmology was expanded and inflated well beyond the idea of past and future Buddhas, so that it included not only an indefinitely large number of Buddhas but also an infinitely large number of realms and universes in which Buddhas operated.[11] For some followers, the karmic power of these transcendent "savior" Buddhas and bodhisattvas become the focus of attention and merit and merit transference was sought from them. In stage three, the specific Amitâbha Pure Land mythos became established. In stage four, a range of practices associated with the Pure Land orientation appeared. At one extreme, the practices could be the preserve of religious specialists, involving the shamanistic vision quest and resembling tantrism (visualization-based Pure Land practice was associated with a class of Mahâyâna samâdhi texts, most importantly later the Kuan-ching). At the other extreme, however, Pure Land teaching could also be interpreted as a teaching for nonspecialists at a far lower level of expectations, the ritual affiliation (possibly) involving something as simple and mundane as recitation of the name of the Buddha. (In the final stage five a critical commentarial tradition became attached to Pure Land, but this probably occurred entirely in China.)[12]

The underlying concepts of Pure Land were typical of Mahâyâna: the distinctive feature was that they set up a strongly "dualistic" or bipolar relationship between the human realm of ignorance and the ideal realm of enlightenment. The Pure Land was an abode of Buddha (Buddha-kṣetra). From the standpoint of the individual seeking religious liberation, the Pure Land served as a karmic transit zone. "Rebirth" in Amitâbha's Pure Land (i.e., karmically shifting one's stream of consciousness to a realm near the Buddha) merely moved the transformative changes which might (ideally) be undergone by a renunciant specialist in this world to another place and a future time where such changes might be more accessible. The Pure Land did not have the substantial epistemological character of any heaven; it manifested both enlightened and unenlightened phases, and did not "exist" any more than any other region of reality characterized by the Buddha's consciousness.

Key, however, to Amitâbha's Sukhâvatî was the vagueness and openness of the presupposed conditions according to which human beings could direct their religiosity in order to be reborn in (karmically transferred to) the environment of this Pure Land when they ended their earthly biological spans. Almost any degree of attention to the Buddha would enable rebirth in Sukhâvatî. Beings needed only to set their minds on Amitâbha, cultivate "roots of good," and plan for achieving enlightenment there. Even beings that had not done well over their lifetimes in attending to the Buddha could achieve rebirth with Amitâbha if they just directed their thoughts that way on their deathbeds and experienced a vision of Amitâbha; even a single sincere thought might be sufficient. Thus the language of the original sûtras collapsed all degrees of practice and attention into a nondiscriminative wave of hopeful good will. The sheer broadness of the path that led into the Pure Land became the rhetorical center.

Pure Land is routinely described as "devotional." Yet any rhetorical isolation of a devotional Buddhism as if it were a category separated from (and subordinate to) "normal" Buddhism is a misrepresentation. All Buddhism is devotional. It deals with experiential transformations which in all cases pose ideals empirically "external" to the starting status of the devotee. In the earliest stages Buddhism posed the experience of Śâkyamuni as a mythic ideal external to the individual followers. The actual ongoing physical presence of the Buddha was presupposed in the sacred installations of medieval Indian monasteries.[13] In the Mahâyâna movement depictions of the ideal merely became multiplied, broadened and abstracted. The movement may even have grown out of the visionary experiences of small scattered groups which were afterwards perpetuated by initiatory lineages.[14] Mahâyâna devotionalism involved elements of the tantric, the shamanic quest and the arts of clairvoyance; it may have shared with other Indian traditions a historical wave of "visionary theism" which affected religious imagination in all of north India.[15]

Presupposing multiple aspects of "Buddha," later Mahâyâna in India integrated philosophy, meditation, a hierarchical ritual monastic system, and personal contact with concrete deities who provided access to supernormal powers and effects along with prajñâ.[16] The texts of Bhâvaviveka, a sixth century Madhyamaka thinker, show that the concept of emptiness and the concept of the Buddha were inseparable, and to "see" the philosophical idea was the same as seeing "the Buddha." Emptiness was associated with a specific form of sensory perception, and visual power yielded concrete visions of the Buddha's physical form merged with intellectual understanding in a single philosophical and devotional event.[17] Bhâvaviveka described phases of his Buddhist practice quasi-physically as "palaces," just as pilgrims such as Hsüan-tsang encountered the Indian Buddhist reality of emptiness in the physical form of landscape, sacred sites, stupas, relics, monastic persons, supernormal events, superknowledges (abhijñâ), concrete manifestations of the Buddha, and visions. Out of this combination of self-reliance and dependence on Buddhas and bodhisattvas arises the special "irony" characteristic of the more sophisticated Mahâyâna literature, in that to be truly independent is to realize one's dependence on others, especially spiritual beings manifesting emptiness.[18]

Such a merger among visionary experience, the monastic experience, Mahâyâna philosophy, the Amitâbha Buddha, and the variety

of possible goals held out by "Pure Land" practice was demonstrated in the Pratyutpanna-sûtra, a text preserved mainly in Tibetan and Chinese. This text propounded visionary contact with Amitâbha for the purpose of furthering one's goal of becoming a perfected bodhisattva in this world. Unlike the Sukhâvatîvyûha it did not deal mainly with the goal of rebirth in a transitional Pure Land, but it did present the Amitâbha meditations in terms of the Perfection of Wisdom literature.[19]

Technical terms used to indicate relations with the Buddha of the Pure Land included buddhânusmṛti (remembering the Buddha), prasada (purity), and adhimukti (directing attention); these were related to the generic Indian term śraddhâ (entrusting, giving one's attention).[20] The meaning of śraddhâ was nonspecific, conveying broadly the idea of participation, engagement, praxis, or more elaborately, participation in any ritual and symbol system which aimed to lead the mind into contact with a higher reality.[21] Even in Pali texts the term (saddhâ in Pali) does not have one precise meaning, but is used in various contexts to indicate a whole range of engagement or serious encounters with Buddhist practice.[22] Indian commentators on tathâgatagarbha thought (which pushed to an extreme a monistic rhetoric in Indian Buddhism) placed a high value on terms such as śraddhâ to describe enlightenment.[23] The usual translation into English for these terms has been "faith," but against the normal English semantics based on Christian or Near Eastern religious associations the term is misleading.

Pure Land practices in India remained closely tied to the visionary experience characteristic of religious specialists.[24] It is likely that the terms given above for "thinking" about the Buddha or "directing attention" to him originally meant some sort of visionary experience (even if it were open to non-monastic people without esoteric lineage requirements).[25] The relevant sûtras mention the cultivation of good deeds,[26] but they also mention deathbed visions and dream visions.[27] This socially open, but still vision-oriented, experience is what Pure Land entailed up until approximately the early T'ang period in China. Only at that point did the nonvisionary practice of

reciting the Buddha's name with low levels of expectation begin to achieve any importance.[28]

Thus, most of the original management of Pure Land "devotionalism" occurred in the monastic context.[29] This phenomenon was true not only for Pure Land, but for the host of other Buddhist deities and practices. (Descriptions of the visionary relationship between this world and the Pure Land as "dualistic" are easily misconstrued without this understanding.) The differences between popular Pure Land devotionalism and monastic practices of Pure Land devotionalism were merely matters of intensity, expectations and access. As Pure Land evolved later in China, the popular tradition would maintain somewhat lower (albeit serious) expectations in exchange for a sense of almost universal access; the monastic level would preserve somewhat higher expectations in linkage with the monastic tradition.

Although no commentarial material survives which indicates that in India the Pure Land language was philosophically elaborated in the same way as the rest of Buddhist language, Chinese and Japanese scholars have always assumed that the Pure Land texts were already backgrounded in India by the same philosophical considerations as the rest of Mahâyâna tradition. At the same time, as in some other Mahâyâna texts such as the Lotus Sûtra, the text's attention is so far focused away from philosophical issues per se that such presuppositions have to be gathered from context.[30]

Pure Land's Weakness in India as a Concretely Operant Tradition

Despite the textual evidence from the sûtras, the practical strength of Pure Land as a working tradition in India at any time is doubtful.[31] Some stone foundations for an Amitâbha image dated 104 CE from Mathurâ are the only archaeological record of an exclusivistic Amitâbha Pure Land practice. Epigraphical evidence from Sañchî from the seventh century mentions Amitâbha, but only in connection with verses praising Avalokiteśvara. Archaeologically speaking the original, non-tantric Amitâbha practice in India appears to have been narrowly confined to the Kusâna period (ca. 50-200 CE) in northwest

India, after which it faded. It exerted no influence elsewhere in India and even in northwest India it had no influence during the subsequent Gupta period.[32] The diaries of early Chinese pilgrims to India do not refer to Pure Land; the earliest and final mention is in the report of Hui-jih (Tz'u-min, d. 748), who began his India pilgrimage in 702. Hui-jih claimed that Indian teachers told him to pursue Pure Land as the quickest means of seeing the Buddha, and he is supposed to have had a Pure Land vision during his sojourn. However, Hui-jih's account is probably unreliable because of his own Chinese Pure Land biases. When he returned home, he became one of the major Pure Land teachers in the later T'ang period.[33]

A distinct sociopolitical history, the issue which becomes crucial in China and Japan, is obscure in India. Practically nothing is known about the circumstances of social production and reproduction of the texts. There is no evidence that Pure Land led to the formation of distinct communities with an unusual character. Generally, scholars have searched in vain for substantial evidence that Indian approaches to Buddhism deviated significantly from the basic, renunciation-oriented Śâkyamuni mythos: even where some Buddhist communities of an alternate character "lay" existed, they did so on a "lay bodhisattva" basis which was closely tied to monasticism.[34] Only the most fragmentary anecdotal evidence suggests that Pure Land teaching might have been associated with creating a Buddhist mythos of a new social character.[35]

Some evidence suggests conflicts between monastic and nonmonastic groups in India based on differing uses of the Pure Land texts. Criticisms made in the Pratyutpanna-sûtra—against an alleged materialist understanding of a visionary buddhânusmṛti experience and mere desire for a fortunate rebirth—seemed to indicate attacks on the Sukhâvatîvyûha goals. The monastic Pratyutpanna stressed the emptiness of the vision of Amitâbha, with all the attendant philosophical language. In contrast to this the Sukhâvatîvyûha's encounter with Amitâbha was said to be depicted as an "actual" event, taking place primarily at the moment of death and indirectly associated with the supernormal powers and attributes of beings in the Pure Land.[36] The

two sûtras may represent differing approaches to the ideas of buddhânusmṛti and buddha-darsana correlated, respectively, with more monastic and less monastic factions of Indian Mahâyâna.

Pure Land was associated with tathâgatagarbha theory and related ideas about the inherent universal liberation of beings, and the Yogâcâra text Ratnagotravibhâga ends with an invocation to Amitâbha.[37] However, associations between tathâgatagarbha and Pure Land did not mean that the two kinds of mythos agreed on practice. The Yogâcâra text Mahâyânasaṃgraha displays polemics against Pure Land. Apparently Pure Land had been institutionalized to some extent in Mahâyâna practice and cult before the Yogâcâra synthesis, so that by the time that Yogâcâra emerged the Amitâbha tradition had grown so popular (at least in some locales) that the mythic-devotional figure of Śâkyamuni (who represented monastic ideals) had been in some cases relegated to the margins of Mahâyâna attention. In response, already before the time of Asaṅga (the chief thinker associated with Yogâcâra) a movement had arisen to defend Śâkyamuni against Amitâbha.[38] The tenth chapter of the Mahâyânasaṃgraha tried to subordinate a variety of diverse practices (including the Pure Land practice and Amitâbha) to the unified Yogâcâra interpretation. Like the Pratyutpanna, Yogâcâra thinkers were apparently concerned that the Pure Land approach and its "dualism" might result in practitioners' thinking that Amitâbha and the Pure Land were somehow substantially real entities, something that might be clung to in an illusory quest for security.[39] The Yogâcâra argument was intended to deny the practical legitimacy of some popular interpretations of the Pure Land.[40]

Such bits of evidence show early friction between a monastic devotionalism and a somewhat more popular devotionalism, played out as a contest between the mythic figures of Śâkyamuni and Amitâbha. This anticipated the later friction between Ch'an/Zen rhetoric and Pure Land rhetoric in China and Japan. Just as in the Mahâyânasaṃgraha, monastic Ch'an/Zen would later try to coopt popularized Pure Land and depict it as an inferior form of Śâkyamuni's teachings.[41]

What is beyond doubt, in any case, is that from an early stage the Pure Land mythos flourished only outside of India. The strong connection between Pure Land and non-Indian groups to the north and west of India must be interpreted in terms of this Indian disinclination regarding the Pure Land variant of Mahâyâna.[42]

Some Relevant Features of Bhakti

Pure Land Buddhism was philosophically not related to bhakti traditions in Hinduism, and the social profile of bhakti became quite different from that of Pure Land in India. However, both grew out of the same civilization, and a look at bhakti helps illuminate the relationships which might exist between religious rhetoric and society in India.[43]

The basis of Hinduism is an idea of Ultimate Reality called Brahman. The relevant religious practices usually emphasized ascetic renunciation and the achievement of power through various kinds of sacrifice. Hinduism inherited from pre-Aryan India a long indigenous tradition of meditative asceticism (muni-yati cults); when this tradition was assimilated to Aryan brahmanical religion involving ṛṣis in the Upaniṣadic period it resulted in the classic brahmanical myth of the search for transcendence culminating in the renunciant hero. The classic renunciant was closely associated with monistic religio-philosophical language. The teachings were expressed in the Vedic literature, received their classical formulation in the doctrines of Śaṅkara, and were otherwise immensely developed in brahmanical speculation in India.

Nevertheless, bhaktic, or "devotional" versions of Hindu religiosity also made their appearance at the earliest stage. Bhakti religiosity assumed that the relationship between man and the ultimate reality was not based on an undifferentiated monism, but rather entailed a "dual" structure, expressing both differentiation between man and Brahman on the one hand and active interrelationship and communion between them on the other. Bhakti can be described as bipolar, dyadic or personalistic because the significance and differentiation of the individual vis à vis the Ultimate is taken as a serious issue. As in the

case of Buddhist śraddhâ, the assumptions of bhakti do not translate easily into English or any European language. Crucially, bhakti and Brahman do not contain the epistemological or ontological meanings of the creator God of Near Eastern traditions because they refer to the Upaniṣadic sense of the ultimate.

Historically, the energies of bhakti apparently came originally from outside the brahmins' Aryan ruling class, reflecting the interests of indigenous peoples in retaining tribal or local deities, although bhakti and brahminism were eventually inseparably blended. Because of the brahminical flexibility, bhaktic versions of Hinduism also became immensely complex.[4]

The formal synthesis of brahminical philosophy and the bipolar structure of bhakti began with certain of the Upaniṣads, became overt in the Bhagavadgîtâ, and emerged most prominently in the Vaiṣṇava traditions, which had the strongest tendency to assimilate to brahmanism and to seek self-justification through the generation of Vedantic doctrines. Most Vaiṣṇavas regarded Râmânuja (eleventh century) as the culmination of Vedantic bhakti theology. Where Śaṅkara had offered a monistic interpretation of the Upaniṣads, Râmânuja developed a bhaktic version. This analysis (viśiṣtâvaita Vedânta) has been unhelpfully translated as "qualified nondualism," but the real sense of viśiṣta is "differentiation:" "(contingent) differentiation in a ground of nondual brahman." Brahman is supreme above all, but several types of knowledge are separately real, including nonsentient matter and sentient but finite/ignorant human selves. Thus human consciousness establishes "dependent" relationships with its Ultimate matrix, because it is discriminated or differentiated—if only contingently—from that matrix.[45] In any case Râmânuja's ideas had nothing to do with a simple "devotionalism."

Viśiṣta arguments about the existential and logical differentiation of the human from God/brahman naturally developed into existential questions of practice, because the more clearly God the matrix was differentiated from the human, the more questions would arise about how the human side could bridge the gap and to create out of human powers the communing relationship with the ultimate re-

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ality. The debate developed in greatest complexity in the two south Indian wings of the Śrī Vaiṣṇava tradition, Vadgalai and Tengalai. Traditional teachings had required bhaktiyoga, a complex religious method tied to brahminical styles of education and practice, including knowledge of the Vedas and śāstras, lifetimes of meditation and ritual practice, and finally the antimasmṛti or final remembrance of the Lord at the conclusion of the biological span. This restrictive view was gradually altered in the medieval traditions such as Pañcarâtras and Alvars, and attention was directed to certain writings attributed to Râmânuja in which the emotional "surrender" elements of the bhakti teachings are stressed rather than the philosophical analysis.[46] For some of the teachings prapatti (surrender, radical grace, devotion, yielding to God) was in theory open to all, regardless of birth, education or even worldly ability, needing none of the ritual accessories (angas) of brahminical bhaktiyoga. Prapatti could thus be understood as an independent upâya towards salvation.[47]

The two Śrîvaiṣṇava streams maintained different views on the relative value of prapatti and bhaktiyoga and on the proper relationship between them; the main question was the residual validity of bhaktiyoga.[48] The more radical was the Tengalai school, associated with the teachings of Pillai Lokâcârya (1264-1369). Pillai took the position that strictly speaking, the grace of Brahman (in this case manifested as the goddess Śrī or Lakṣmî, consort of the supreme male deity Nârâyaṇa) was all that was needed to achieve liberation.[49] Bhaktiyoga could be abandoned at the time of the realization of the soul's utter dependence on the Lord. Self-effort and self-purposive practices were only provisional and ultimately at odds with the soul's true nature of dependence on the Lord. The scriptural requirements of ritual, wisdom and devotion were both ideal but in the final analysis also unnecessary. Since, in fact, the traditional brahminical requirements could not logically have any causal force toward liberation because the human is totally dependent on God, the only reason they would be performed, especially after surrender to God, would be to please God and to provide witness to the grace of God. Tengalai teachers gave priority to the devotion represented by the Alvars, epics and

puranas, and preferred a relatively informal rhetoric based in popular oral religious life.[50]

In theory such medieval developments of Indian bhakti, both in south India and in the related sant tradition of north India, could have sharp political implications, as summarized for example by A.K. Ramanujan:

> ...bhakti religions like Vîraśaivism are Indian analogues to European protestant movements. Here we suggest a few parallels: protest against mediators like priest, ritual, temples, social hierarchy, in the name of direct, individual, original experience; a religious movement of and for the underdog, including saints of all castes and trades (like Bunyan, the tinker), speaking the sub-standard dialect of the region, producing often the first authentic regional expressions and translations of inaccessible Sanskritic texts (like the translations of the Bible in Europe); a religion of arbitrary grace, with a doctrine of the mystically chosen elect, replacing a social hierarchy-by-birth with a mystical hierarchy-by-experience; doctrines of work as worship leading to a puritan ethic; monotheism and evangelism, a mixture of intolerance and humanism, harsh and tender.[51]

Relevant Similarities of Bhakti and Pure Land

Bhakti Hinduism and Pure Land Buddhism are both counterintuitive from classical Near Eastern theistic religious perspectives. Both possess underlying theories of knowledge which (while quite distinguishable from each other) when compared to traditional Western thought are nonfoundational and process-oriented. In this underlying flexibility, both Hinduism and Buddhism stand in contrast to the historical concreteness, linearity, and epistemological realism which characterize Near Eastern traditions. The flexibility of the theories of knowledge yield a different attitude to textuality and mythmaking: while neither tradition has been unaware of texts which might be appealed to as ultimate reference, it is easy to understand the textual corpus as something expanding and renewable. This allows a large literature with a plethora of mythic characters, stories and technical philosophical terms which all make potential authority claims. In both Hinduism and Buddhism, the relative openness of theories of knowledge gives scope for a rich admixture of folk religion and an

accomodation to the coexistence of multiple religious motives. Religious purism is rare; indeed, if it appears at all, it is primarily in a politically-driven context.

Both Hinduism and Buddhism were originally oriented to śramaṇa ideals, and because of these roots in the ascetic traditions of religious virtuosi, both have revealed a strong mainstream tendency to concentrate political power and authority in religious experts.[52] The original focus on śramaṇa ideals has consequently meant that the Indian traditions have been confusing, and apparently contradictory, when they have seemed to double-back on themselves and to display a bipolar (dualistic or theistic) structure which superficially resembles the Near Eastern traditions. Both bhakti and Pure Land variants of Hinduism and Buddhism have diverged eventually from the pure monistic presentations derived from their śramaṇa cores by making explicit the bipolarity of experience. Depictions of the human religious predicament for both have involved tensions between the human reality and the religious ideal; pure monism has been regarded as a form of specialized religious rhetoric that does not represent the complexity of experienced religion.[53] Both reflect the ancient problem of the "leap" between different dimensions of experience which recurs explicitly or implicitly in all Indian traditions.[54]

By making bipolarity explicit in a new way, the inherent tendency of both bhakti and Pure Land traditions was to equalize the status of human aspirants and to reduce the need for mediating authority. Particularly when devotional theory shifted in the direction of prapatti or radical grace, traditional understandings of religious mediation were interrupted. Bipolarity encouraged a shift towards a language reinforcing individual persons as independently religiously empowered.

Differences Between Pure Land and Bhakti

This is not to argue that bhakti and Pure Land shared anything more than these loose similarities. The underlying experiential, tonal, emotional and philosophical dimensions remained sharply different. Even where Pure Land practices superficially resembled tantric ones, involving shamanic techniques of visualization, still

> ...it is striking how—compared to the Bhagavadgîtâ—the Pure Land texts manage to divorce visualization from devotion: the saving Lord remains impersonal and distant, a power to be tapped by vision and recitation, in a cool and dazzling ecstacy rather than in a genuine encounter of the human with a divine other.[55]

Polemics between Buddhists and Śaivas in medieval south India recorded in the literature of the bhakti movement show the two traditions became polarized in part because of the underlying incompatibility of their religious messages. Śaiva bhakti was concerned with affective encounters with Deity that often involved possession by the god and altered states bordering on madness; ecstatic dance, music and verse were the favored forms of communication. Bhakti placed a tremendous emphasis on literal, concrete manifestations of deities at particular sacred places at which power was made immanent. This kind of religiosity was remote from the cool control of mind and body imagined as the ideal in any form of Buddhist practice.[56]

Pure Land was also a more purely Buddhist product than bhakti was a Vedantic product. It was probably hybridized consciously out of a variety of sources. Because Pure Land was not the product of preexisting popular strains of local religion which pressed their claims into the consciousness of renunciant specialists, it was simpler, more idealized and more abstracted than the varied and fragmented bhakti traditions.

Crucially, however, the historical sociopolitical outcomes of bhakti and Pure Land ideas in India were fundamentally divergent. Bhakti became the de facto mainstream presentation of Hinduism in the last millenium or so. In contrast, Pure Land Buddhism seems to have failed quite remarkably in India to gain any sort of long-term foothold (even taking into account the relatively small population of Buddhists in India at any time). Yet there certainly existed a theoretical potential for doctrinal evolution broadly parallel to that of radical bhakti, i.e., a viśiṣta-style analysis, with its combination of existential realism, philosophical sophistication, and potentially popularizing politics.

One explanation for failure is that is was mythically easier to marginalize the role of bipolar presentation in Buddhist traditions. Compared to Hinduism, Buddhism began even more unambiguously

with a śramaṇa model sharply defined by the myth of Śâkyamuni; thereafter the specialist model of Buddhist practice was not challenged, as in the case of bhakti traditions, by popular energies originating from outside the system clamoring to be recognized in terms of the elite specialists of the system. Monastic Buddhism was vigorous, and it dominated Buddhism much more than any single mythic format dominated Hinduism. The bipolar mythic structure of Pure Land remained clearly subordinate to the mythic model of emulating Śâkyamuni.

However, even monastic Buddhism in India eventually lost power. Why, when the monastic movement began to weaken in India, did Buddhist energies not simply shift to Pure Land approaches? Are there some logical or internal features inherent in the tradition that blocked Pure Land Buddhism from exploring the political and existential interests that encouraged a bhaktic or viśiṣta approach?

No such barriers are logically apparent. Therefore the most plausible hypothesis is the overall politics of Buddhism's relation to Hinduism. All Buddhism in India—even in its ordinary monastic forms—had trouble competing with later Hinduism. Scholars have not agreed on the reasons, but an argument which fits (especially in relation to Pure Land) is that Buddhism's main threat to Hinduism in India was not philosophy and not even surface social pragmatics (Buddhism in practice did not completely reject varna), but rather something more fundamental: the unsuccessful root challenge that the Buddhist mythos and its ideals offered to the brahminical vision of life-stages (âśramas) and the varna worldview. It is a possibility that in ancient India, for some centuries after the Aśokan imperial sponsorship of Buddhist institutions, the brahminical vision was actually put on the defensive. However, after about the first millenium, the rise of bhakti conclusively overcame Buddhist culture. Bhakti was a powerful synthesis of the matured political and economic interests of later premodern Indian society, which could incorporate the popular attachment to the gods while situating itself Vedantically under the religious authority of the brahmins and supporting the varna/jati system's programmatic social expectations.[57]

Buddhism had no means of responding to later premodern Indian society's increasing need for social authority and caste articulation which was as effectively synthetic as bhakti (Buddhism's strongest gambit was the tantric guru-based traditions).[58] This noncompetiveness was especially true for Pure Land. Normal Buddhism was already somewhat marginalized as a non-brahminical tradition. Pure Land, which could potentially detach itself from monasticism and guru-based authority, could thus also detach itself from the vestiges of varna influence that continued to cling to those forms of organization. The key historical fact is that no ancient and medieval Indians wanted, or were able, to pick up such possibilities.[59]

Bhakti did not seriously challenge the structure of varna society. Leveling politics do not appear in the Bhagavadgîtâ, for example, which although it was about bhakti was also a highly brahminical text concerned with the preservation of social structure. Vaiṣṇavism associated with Râmânuja remained strongly brahminical. Even in the more radical versions of Śrîvaiṣṇavism, prapatti tended to be assimilated to brahminical ritual: the tradition was resistant to allowing the teachings to subvert the dominant authority relationships of Indian society. In the Tengalai school, the theory of ignoring caste was honored far more in the breach than in the ritual observance.[60] Long term developments in the sant traditions were similar.[61]

Hindu religiosity has been thoroughly dominated by religious virtuosi, their special religious communities, and patronage by central political authorities (often with cosmological wholistic visions about the central role of themselves in a unified cosmos). The insistence on maintaining a cosmologically fixed social structure in God's fluid world may be one of the central paradoxes of mainstream Hindu religious thought, but the more privileged elements of a society did not see the differentiations of social reality as a problem. Nothing was more characteristic of India than the "harmonization" (i.e., undifferentiated submersion) of all philosophical and religious perspectives into the basic caste cultural politics of the society and the economic and political interests managed by caste agreements. The theoretical political implications of bhakti idealized by Ramanujan had little ef-

fect on the underlying politics of Indian society up to and including the twentieth century. Bhakti did not succeed in introducing real social alterity into Hindu society.[62] Renunciant and bhaktic versions of the traditions were never allowed to separate into truly independent institutions with independent social agendas, as would become the case with major parts of Chinese and Japanese Pure Land Buddhism.

It was because of the evolution of such middle-elite interest groups, who were able to insist on supporting socially-open interpretations of Pure Land, that the direction of Pure Land would become so different in China and Japan. Obviously, then, the Amitâbha cult depended for its flourishing on its contact with the non-Indian world, and the only directions where Pure Land Buddhism could succeed were beyond the authority structures of Indian society.[63]

The Limits of Indian Buddhist Upâya

Pure Land has a low reputation in Western scholarship partly because of Westerners' orientalist interest in exotic (i.e., monastic and monistic) religious forms, but also because in a straightforward historical way it failed politically in Indian culture. However, understanding this failure in a more insightful way has implications for a view of Buddhism as a whole.

On a purely theoretical basis (and in view of the flourishing of Hindu bhakti doctrines and the success of the Shin tradition later in Japan) there is no reason why a sophisticated bipolar or "bhaktic" version of Buddhism could not have evolved in India. The non-renunciant and bipolar approach made at least as much sense in a Buddhist Mahâyâna context as in a Hindu one.[64] Traditional Indian Buddhism was in practice as much interested in the lived practical coexistence of the realms of ignorance and enlightenment (and the problems of mediating between them) as it was interested in formal analytical problems set by the parameters of Buddhist philosophy. A great deal of the teaching "work" of the tradition was carried by the implicit, but absolutely essential, mythic and institutional "devotionalisms" and "dualisms" of deity-belief systems and of rituals and

stories, which were taken to be the sine qua non of Buddhism in most of its history.

But no Indian Buddhist equivalent of Pillai Lokâchârya ever appeared. Despite the gradual decline of monasticism, somehow the Buddhist tradition's devotionalism remained allied with semi-monastic orientations or tantric lineage orientations. Somehow its practices of contact with spiritual beings allowed Indian Buddhism to ignore commentary on a variety of authority problems of the kind that preoccupied the prapatti teachers. What is certain in any case is that while intensive technical discursive attention in Indian Buddhist thought was turned to abstruse problems of perception and language, practically no theory was devoted to the "political" practices of the "upâya of institutions," in which Buddhists were actually immersed up to their necks. Somehow Indian Buddhism engaged in little or no systematic theoretical discussion of the prapatti problem or the problem of the "leap," and the conventions of monasticism or lineage in Buddhism were rarely if ever systematically questioned in the traditional Asian context of Buddhism outside of China or Japan. In short, the Indian experience left significant gaps in the Buddhist theory of upâya.

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[1] Akira Hirakawa, *History of Indian Buddhism, from Śâkyamuni to Nâgârjuna* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1990), pp. 286-290; A.K. Warder, *Indian Buddhism* (Dehli: Motilal Banarsidass, 1980), pp. 356-362.

[2] See Kenneth K. Tanaka, *The Dawn of Chinese Pure Land Buddhist Doctrine* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990), p. 52.

[3] Tanaka, pp. 3-4; Julian F. Pas, *Shan-tao's Commentary on the Amitâyur-Buddhânusmṛti-Sûtra* (McMaster University PhD dissertation, 1973), pp. 60-64.

[4] Fujita Kôtatsu, *Genshi jôdo shisô no kenkyû*. 2nd ed. (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1970), p. 17.

[5] Fujita Kôtatsu as cited in Hirakawa, *History of Indian Buddhism*, p. 290.

[6] However, Sukhâvatî ideas were not often given central position, so the specific and restricted practice directed to Amitâbha was rare. See Gregory Schopen,

"Sukhâvatî as Generalized Religious Goal in Sanskrit Mahâyâna Buddhist Literature," *Indo-Iranian Journal*, vol. 19, pp. 177-210 (1977); see also Tanaka, p. 3.

[7] See Paul Griffiths et al., trans., *The Realm of Awakening: a Translation and Study of the Tenth Chapter of Asaṅga's Mahâyânasangraha* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 35.

[8] See Tanaka, pp. 8-9; on the origin of the Amitâbha cult, see also Pas, pp. 4-64, esp. pp. 51-52. (Contending Pure Land cults did not reach even the same level of minor popularity, e.g., Aksobhya Buddha's Pure Land, which was aimed at ascetic renunciants. See Tai-wo Kwan, *A Study of the Teaching Regarding the Pure Land of Aksobhya Buddha in Early Mahâyâna* (University of California at Los Angeles PhD dissertation, 1987)).

[9] Soho Machida, "Life and Life, the Infinite: A Historical and Philological Analysis of the Amida Cult," *Sino-Platonic Papers* [Department of Oriental Studies, University of Pennsylvania], no. 9, pp. 1-46 (December 1988); see also Tanaka.

[10] Thus the conclusion of Fujita's standard study of Pure Land in India.

[11] The development of an expanded Buddhist devotional repertoire may have been connected to social instability after the breakdown of the Mauryan regime and the ultimately unsuccessful attempt to compete with emergent new Śaivite and Bhâgavata bhakti traditions; see below.

[12] On the five stages, see Tanaka, pp. 4-13.

[13] Gregory Schopen, "The Buddha as an Owner of Property and Permanent Resident in Medieval Indian Monasteries," *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, vol. 18, pp. 181-217 (1990), and G. Schopen, "Burial Ad Sanctos and the Physical Presence of the Buddha in Early Indian Buddhism: A Study in the Archaeology of Religions," *Religion*, vol. 17, pp. 193-225 (1987).

[14] Andrew Rawlinson, "The Problem of the Origin of the Mahayana," in Slater, Peter and Donald Wiebe, eds. *Traditions in Contact and Change. Selected Proceedings of the XIVth Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions* (Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1980), pp. 163-169.

[15] Stephan Beyer, "Notes on the Vision Quest in Early Mahâyâna," in: Lancaster, Lewis, ed. *Prajñâpâramitâ and Related systems: Studies in Honor of Edward Conze* (Berkeley: Berkeley Buddhist Studies Series, 1977); on the visionary qualities of the Sukhâvatî-vyûha and the Kuan-ching, see especially pp. 330-331.

[16] The semantic field of the bodhisattva unquestionably included the idea of the wonder-worker; see Luis O. Gómez, "The Bodhisattva as Wonder Worker," in: Lancaster, Lewis, ed. *Prajñâpâramitâ and Related systems: Studies in Honor of Edward Conze* (Berkeley: Berkeley Buddhist Studies Series, 1977), pp. 221-257. The main public function of the Buddhist monk throughout Asia at all times had to do with taking care of spirits of the dead via the supernormal powers accumulated through renunciation. See Gregory Schopen, "Filial Piety and the Monk in the Practice of Indian Buddhism: A Question of 'Sinicization' Viewed from the Other Side," *T'oung Pao*, vol. 66, pp. 110-126 (1980) or John Strong, "Filial Piety and Buddhism: The Indian Antecedents to a Chinese' Problem," in: Peter Slater and Donald Wiebe, eds. *Traditions in Contact and Change* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1983) pp. 171-186.

[17] Malcolm David Eckel, *To See the Buddha: a Philosopher's Quest for the Meaning of Emptiness* (San Francisco: Harper, 1991), pp. 3-4.

[18] Bhâvaviveka's rhetoric also expressed "previous vows" (pranidhâna) by which the Buddha expressed his activity to rescue humankind. See Eckel, pp. 17-18, 51-61, 68-83, 147-148. Gratitude to an "empty" deity, the symbolized "otherness" of perfect emptiness, saturates Mahâyâna literature. Cf. George R. Elder, " 'Grace' in Martin Luther and Tantric Buddhism," in: Houston, G.W., ed. *The Cross and the Lotus: Christianity and Buddhism in Dialogue* (Dehli: Motilal, 1985), pp. 39-49 (tantric Buddhism also can externalize the Buddha's action as "grace"). These ideas, which originate quite separately from the Pure Land mythos per se, parallel the later assumptions of Jôdoshinshû Buddhism in Japan.

[19] Paul M. Harrison, "Buddhânusmṛti in the Pratyutpanna-Buddha-Sammukhâvasthita-samâdhi-sûtra," *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, vol. 6, pp. 41-42 (1978).

[20] Although for heuristic purposes the bipolar structure of Pure Land can be called "bhaktic," the term is not used at all in the Sanskrit of the Indian Pure Land texts. See Fujita, pp. 545-549.

[21] See William Cantwell Smith, *Faith and Belief* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), pp. 59-68.

[22] B.M. Barua, "Faith in Buddhism," in: Law, B.C., ed. *Buddhistic Studies* (Calcutta, 1931, 1983), pp. 329-349. Saddhâ serves as part of various compound words which point to various levels of attainment, including the highest ones. Standing by itself without specific context saddhâ or śraddhâ is ambiguous. See also Nihon bukkyô gakkai, ed. *Bukkyô ni okeru shin no mondai* (Kyoto: Heirakuji shoten, 1963) and Sung Bae Park, *Buddhist Faith and Sudden Enlightenment* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983) and *Wonhyo's Commentaries on the Awakening of Faith in Mahâyâna* (University of California, Berkeley PhD dissertation, 1979). Nevertheless representatives of Pali Buddhism have tried to insist that although devotional and faith elements were unquestionably part of early Buddhism, Mahâyâna diverged in non-Buddhist directions. (For example, K.N. Upadhyaya, "The Impact of the Bhakti Movement on the Development of Mahayana Buddhism," in: Narain, A.K., ed. *Studies in the History of Buddhism* (papers at International Conference on History of Buddhism at University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1980), pp. 349-357.)

[23] David Seyfort Ruegg, *Buddha-nature, Mind and the Problem of Gradualism in Comparative Perspective: on the Transmission and Reception of Buddhism in India and Tibet* (London: School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 1989), pp. 46-48.

[24] The evidence necessarily comes mostly from the Chinese record. See Carl B. Becker, "Religious Visions: Experiential Grounds for the Pure Land Tradition," *Eastern Buddhist*, vol. 17, no. 7, pp. 138-153 (1984).

[25] However, the categorization of ranks of followers is not very central or important in the original texts, and distinctions between initiated specialists and non-inititated non-specialists, or between monastics and laypersons, are not at issue. (Fujita, p. 537)

[26] Schopen, "Sukhâvatî as a Generalized Goal."

[27] A special relationship may exist between Pure Land imagery and the common medical phenomenon of the near-death or deathbed vision. (Cf. Becker)

[28] The interpretation of Pure Land throughout Asia has been deeply influenced, or perhaps confused, by the retroactive interests of Japanese Pure Land (especially Jôdoshinshû) in demonstrating that its egalitarian practices and ideas go back to ancient Buddhism.

[29] Monks and nuns, along with lay people, were heavily involved in the donative, merit-making activities at stûpa sites; cult activities were probably led by monastics. This is exactly the pattern which prevailed in early Chinese Buddhism. Gregory Schopen, "Two Problems in the History of Indian Buddhism: The Layman/Monk Distinction and the Doctrines of the Transference of Merit," *Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik*, vol. 10, pp. 9-47 (1985).

[30] E.g., the Pure Land literature may even have been written by a different community than the one which compiled the Perfection of Wisdom literature (Hirakawa, *History of Indian Buddhism*, p. 290). It is reasonable to assume, based on understandings of Pure Land later in other parts of Asia together with bits of evidence above, that the idea of the Pure Land was from the beginning multivocal. An uneducated peasant might have taken the imagery literally, but it is a modern artifact to suppose that religiously educated Indians would have taken Pure Land imagery "literally," rather than metaphorically, allusively, poetically, or visionarily.

[31] The lack of contextual knowledge about ancient Indian Buddhism makes it extremely difficult to reconstruct. See Harrison, pp. 35-36.

[32] Gregory Schopen, "The Inscription on the Kusân Image of Amitâbha and the Character of the Early Mahâyâna in India," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, vol. 10, no. 2, pp. 99-134 (1987).

[33] Tanaka, p. 3.

[34] Parts of Indian Buddhism both early and late may have accommodated a weak distinction between monk and lay statuses, but there was no long-term relaxation of quasi-monastic expectations. It has been argued that the lay-monk category may not be useful in classic Indian Buddhism, since the trend was to generalize to more followers the possibility of achieving yogic goals, such as the attainment of rebirth in Sukhâvatî, that were formerly the province of ascetics. (Gregory Schopen, "The Generalization of an Old Yogic Attainment in Medieval Mahâyâna Sûtra Literature:

Some Notes on Jâtismara," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, vol. 6, no. 1, pp. 133-134 (1983).) Yet in any case the category of practitioner was relatively elite, seeking power by means of special access to some kind of charismatic authority typically held in teaching lineages with or without full monastic precept..

[35] For example, according to the Tibetan historian of Buddhism Târânâth,

> "Amitâbha's worship could be traced back to Saraha or Râhulbhadra, a great magician, and reputed to be the teacher of Nâgârjuna, who saw Amitâbha in the land of Dhingkota and died with his face turned towards Suhâvatî. The name Saraha does not sound Indian, probably a Sûdra represented in Tibetan scrolls with a beard and top knot and holding an arrow in his hand. Thus, the first person whom tradition connects with the worship of Amitâbha was of low caste and bore a foreign name. He saw the deity in a foreign country, and was represented as totally unlike a Buddhist monk." (B.N. Puri, *Buddhism in Central Asia* (Dehli: Motilal Banarsidass, 1987), pp. 142-143.)

[36] While the vision that led to the Sukhâvatîvyûha Pure Land may have been differently oriented than the Pratyutpanna—the former was after all meant to create wide access to the Buddha—it is illegitimate to sharply oppose the texts, because the difference is one of degree, not of kind. (Cf. Harrison, esp. pp. 51-52.) Harrison argues that the Sukhâvatîvyûha is less sophisticated because its Amitâbha is said to be not nirmita ("apparitional"). However, the term nirmita in Sanskrit actually has no philosophical content but was a descriptive term associated with the idea of "earthly" manifestations of the Buddha, i.e., nirmânakaya, as contrasted with sambhogakâya. The Sukhâvatîvyûha merely indicates that Amitâbha is a sambhogakâya entity. See Nakamura Hajime, ed. *Bukkyôgo daijiten* (Tokyo: Tôkyô shoseki, 1981), pp. 131, 291, 293.

[37] By the merit I have acquired through this,
May all living beings come to perceive
The Lord Amitâyus endowed with infinite light,
And, having seen him, may they, owing to the arising
Of the immaculate vision of the Doctrine in them
Obtain the Supreme Enlightenment.

(Translated by Jikido Takasaki, *A Study on the Ratnagotravibhâga (Uttaratantra)* (Roma: Istitutio Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1966), pp. 389-390; see esp. his footnote 84.)

[38] One Indian text, the Karunâpundarîka, was devoted to promoting Śâkyamuni over Amitâbha. (John P. Keenan, "Introduction," in: Griffiths et al., *The Realm of Awakening*, pp. 35-36.) The technical argument utilized was that because Śâkyamuni has chosen this impure world as his sphere of activity, his compassion was superior to that of Buddhas like Amitâbha who had chosen to reside in a pure world. In some

locales, the cult of Śâkyamuni itself may have undergone a change in which he too came to be worshipped as some kind of altruistic savior.

[39] Keenan, pp. 37-39. The interpretation suggests that Yogâcâra monastics were aware of the popularization of Pure Land myth and were already engaged in a polemic trying to draw it back into the range of rhetoric and practice which were de facto associated with monasticism. Thus Yogâcârins denied that the karmic transition zone of the Pure Land "really existed;" if it did not really exist, ordinary persons could not make their orientation to it; if they could not make their orientation to it, the only access to Buddhism would be through the meditation and monistic insights of the specialists. But it is doubtful whether the Pure Land claim for a karmic transition zone was a claim that the Pure Land was "substantial" in the sense of svabhâva as treated in Madhyamaka thought! There is no indication in the intellectual Chinese and Japanese Pure Land traditions that mythic bipolarity ever involved such an attribution of "substantiality." Furthermore, in view of the intensely imaginative and thaumaturgical worlds in all Asian monastic Buddhists also lived, any claim that Pure Landers engaged in exceptional imaginary supernaturalism, or that monastic Buddhism was in contrast "demythologized," is disingenuous.

[40] Cf. Tanaka, p. 12.

[41] See Paul O. Ingram, "The Zen Critique of Pure Land Buddhism," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, vol. 41, no. 2, pp. 184-200 (June 1973).

[42] The imagery of Sukhâvatî (especially in its details reflecting visions of material wealth) may have reflected the prosperity of merchants in the boundary Kushan empire who were probably the best audience for Pure Land teaching. (Fujita, p. 256) The non-Indian trend is associated with the Pure Land escape from stûpa-based practices, which have sometimes been suggested as the source of a "lay" Mahâyâna. (Hirakawa Akira, *History of Indian Buddhism*, pp. 270-274, 308-311 and "The Rise of Mahâyâna Buddhism and Its Relationship to the Worship of Stûpas," *Memoirs of the Research Department of the Toyo Bunko*, vol. 22, pp. 77-91, 102-106 (1963).) The sukhâvatî in the Smaller Sukhâvatîvyûha Sûtra probably models the idealized image of an Indian stûpa, and passages in various older versions and translations of the Larger Sukhâvatîvyûha Sûtra introduce stûpa worship as one of the kinds of meritorious practice which will qualify followers for birth in the Pure Land. However references to stûpa worship tended to be edited out of later Pure Land texts. Probably Amitâbha Buddha replaced the stûpa as the focus of attention because, as the more abstract (and flexible) representation of Buddhism, it manifested eternal life and left no death relics to be enshrined in fixed places. (Hirakawa, "The Rise of Mahâyâna," pp. 91-94)

[43] On topics in Hinduism see Mircea Eliade, ed. *The Encyclopedia of Religion* (New York: Macmillan, 1986).

[44] On the continuities between bhakti and the underlying brahminical-yogic interests of Vedantic religion, see Madeleine Biardeau. *Hinduism: The Anthropology of a Civilization* (Dehli: Oxford University Press, 1989), pp. 84-121. On bhakti groups in general, see Jan Gonda, *Die Religionen Indiens*, vol. II (Stuttgart, 1963), pp. 229-252, 125-150 and many other sources such as R.G. Bhandarkar, *Vaisnavism, Śaivism and Minor Religious Systems* (Poona, 1982) and Mariasusai Dhavamony, *Love of God According to Śaiva Siddhânta* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971).

[45] On Râmânuja's Vedantic technical thought see sources such as Anima Sen Gupta, *A Critical Study of the Philosophy of Ramanuja* (Varanasi: Chowhamba Sanskrit Series Office, 1967) or P.N. Srinivasachari, *The Philosophy of Viśiṣṭâvaita*, 2nd ed. (Adyar, 1946). Śaiva Siddhânta analytical developments were equally complex, e.g., M.M. Arulchelvam, in: John Ross Carter, ed. *Of Human Bondage and Divine Grace* (La Salle, IL: Open Court, 1992), pp. 1-55.

[46] See John Carman, *The Theology of Ramanuja: an Essay in Interreligious Understanding* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974).

[47] Patricia Y. Mumme, *The Śrîvaiṣṇava Theological Dispute: Manavalamamuni and Vedânta Deśika* (Madras: New Era Publications, 1988), p. 74, and Vasudha Narayanan, "Karma, Bhaktiyoga, and Grace in the Śrîvaiṣṇava tradition: Râmânuja and Karattalvân," and "Bondage and Grace in the Śrîvaiṣṇava Tradition: Pillai Lokâçârya and Vedânta Deśika," in: Carter, John Ross, ed. *Of Human Bondage and Divine Grace*, pp. 57-73 and pp. 75-94.

[48] The more conservative Vadgalai school was associated with the teachings of Vedânta Deśika (1268-1369), who followed the tendency of the great majority of bhakti schools in maintaining that a mixed pattern of religious activity would be required for liberation, combining ritual, conscious devotion, and caste observance.

[49] Vadgalai was called the "monkey school" because in the same way that an infant monkey must hold onto its mother's fur in order to be carried, it taught that some voluntary effort by the devotee of God/Sri/Nârayâna was required in order to combine with the activity of God and result in liberation. Tengalai, on the other hand, was called the "cat school," because in the same way that a kitten is picked up by its mother by the back of the neck, with no effort or intention on its part, it taught that ultimately no voluntary effort on the part of the devotee was needed in order for the devotee to be taken to liberation.

[50] Mumme, pp. 75-95. Tengalai teaching has a logical structure practically identical to that of Shin Buddhism (interestingly enough, Pillai was Shinran's near contemporary). Tengalai prapatti was supposed to modify the relationship with a variety of formal religious behaviors. Ritual acts (karmas, which included the study of scripture, offerings of flowers, prayers, and expiations) were not supposed to be done as matter of detached obligation, but out of the free and spontaneous expression of devotion. For example, prayers should be ardent, but brief; they served only to appeal for bhakti and jñâna. In addition, proper family life and sexuality were sanctioned, astrology and magic were criticized, extremes of asceticism were avoided, right livelihood was practiced, overanxiety about life and death was avoided, animal

sacrifice was abjured, and so on. (See John C. Plott, *A Philosophy of Devotion: a Comparative Study of Bhakti and Prapatti in Viśiṣṭâvaita and St. Bonaventura and Gabriel Marcel* (Dehli: Motilal Banarsidass, 1974), pp. 253-258.)

[51] A.K. Ramanujan, trans., *Speaking of Siva* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1973), pp. 53-54. See also Karine Schomer, "Introduction: The Sant Tradition in Perspective," in: Karine Schomer and W.H. McLeod, eds. *The Sants: Studies in a Devotional Tradition of India* (Berkeley: Berkeley Religious Studies Series, 1987), pp. 2, 8, and John Stratton Hawley and Mark Juergensmeyer, *Songs of the Saints of India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).

[52] Of course, within the Indian setting Hinduism and Buddhism had different foci. Hinduism was inseparable from the varna system and its assumptions about the special cosmic role of brahmins in mediating religious power. Classical Buddhism rejected the concept of the inherited brahminical priesthood, but partly substituted in its place the monastic sangha, which tended to achieve a similar cosmological mediating role and linkage with temporal political power. (See Stanley Tambiah, *World Conqueror, World Renouncer: A Study of Buddhism and Polity in Thailand Against a Historical Background* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976).)

[53] If the ordinary world, and our own persons, are already subsumed in the higher reality, how is it that our human experience is painful and flawed? Pure monistic positions are also paradoxical on a strictly logical basis. A great deal of effort in Hindu monistic philosophical thought was devoted to devices to explain away the apparent contradictions of experience, as in Śaṅkara's concept of maya and multiple levels of reality, but in practice such a recognition of the bipolarity of experience amounts to a bipolar doctrine anyway.

[54] Karl H. Potter, *Presuppositions of India's Philosophies* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1963), pp. 236-256. In fact, monisms smuggle bipolar structure into their overall patterns by means of institutional dyadism: monk-versus-lay relationships, or guru-and-disciple-versus-non-initiate relationships. Bipolar structure could be thus fixed in an opposition of specially authorized and legitimated social roles.

[55] Beyer, p. 340.

[56] Glenn E. Yocum, "Buddhism Through Hindu Eyes: Śaivas and Buddhists in Medieval Tamilnad," in: Slater, Peter and Donald Wiebe, eds. *Traditions in Contact and Change. Selected Proceedings of the XIVth Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions* (Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1980), pp. 143-162.

[57] Arvind Sharma, *Thresholds in Hindu-Buddhist Studies* (Calcutta: Minerva, 1979), pp. 64-82. Strong, p. 173 has noted that some Chinese Buddhist reactions to Confucian accusations against Buddhist unfiliality had antecedents in Indian Buddhist reactions to identical brahminical attacks.

[58] Interest in Buddhism was fading even before the Islamic invasions physically destroyed monastic centers in northern India. Perhaps the brahminical system was

better able to meet the lay people's need for ordinary ritual services (life cycle and crisis rites) whereas in Buddhism the emphasis of the lay role was on donation to institutions. Another argument holds that Buddhist identity tended to become fuzzy, for lay involvement in Buddhism blurred monasticism (especially as compared to the Jaina tradition) and Buddhist doctrines such as those about bodhisattvas were so flexible that they were vulnerable to assimilation by bhakti. (Padmanabh S. Jaini, "The Disappearance of Buddhism and The Survival of Jainism: A Study in Contrast," in: Narain, A.K., ed. *Studies in the History of Buddhism* (papers at International Conference on History of Buddhism at University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1980), pp. 81-91.)

[59] Strangely, ancient Buddhism probably began with an urban base and even made its initial appeal to merchant classes. See A.L. Basham, "The Background to the Rise of Buddhism," in: Narain, A.K., ed. *Studies in the History of Buddhism* (papers at International Conference on History of Buddhism at U of Wisconsin, Madison, 1980), p. 17; Narain, A.K. "Toward a New History of Buddhism," in: Narain, A.K., ed. *Studies in the History of Buddhism* (papers at International Conference on History of Buddhism at U of Wisconsin, Madison), pp. xv-xxxi; see also Trevor Ling, *The Buddha: Buddhist Civilization in India and Ceylon* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1973).

[60] Śrîvaiṣṇavism was saturated with normal brahminical authority elements. The teachings were mediated by guru-based teacher-disciple networks. The âchârya and the initiation he provided remained crucial and lineage organization essential. Women were still discriminated against. Even for Tengalai brahmins, ritual observance was exactly like that for other Hindu brahmins, although in principle the âchârya could come from any caste. See K. Gnanambal, "Śrîaiṣṇavas and Their Religious Institutions," *Bulletin Anthropological Survey of India*, vol. 20, pp. 97-187 (July-Dec 1971); Kadambi Rangachariyar, *The Sri Vaishnava Brahmans* (Madras, 1931); Patricia Y. Mumme, "Rules and Rhetoric: Caste Observance in Śrîvaiṣṇava Doctrine and Practice," *Journal of Vaiṣṇava Studies*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 113-133 (Winter 1993) and "The Evolution of the Tenkalai Understanding of the Ācārya: Teacher, Mediator and Savior" (Unpublished paper from the International Śrîvaiṣṇava Conference, Bombay, December 1988-January 1989). On Lingâyat assimilation into brahmanical patterns see William McCormack, "On Lingâyat Culture," in: Ramanujan, *Speaking of Siva*, pp. 175-187.

[61] The Kabir panth ("sect") should in theory have been the most socially reformist because of the relationship to Kabir, but see David N. Lorenzen, "The Kabîr Panth: Heretics to Hindus," in: David N. Lorenzen, ed. *Religious Change and Cultural Domination* (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 1981), pp. 151-171; Lorenzen, "The Social Ideologies of Hagiography: Śaṅkara, Tukârâm and Kabîr," in: Milton Israel and N.K. Wagle, eds. *Religion and Society in Maharashtra* (Toronto: Univer-

sity of Toronto Centre for South Asian Studies, 1987), pp. 92-114; and Lorenzen, "The Kabir-Panth and Social Protest," in: Schomer, ed. *The Sants*, pp. 281-303.

[62] The historical situation here is of course extremely complex; the arrival of Islam, which offered Indians a way out of the caste system, may have historically preempted certain developments in bhakti and also by rallying Hindus around Hinduism prevented more internal diversification.

[63] Viz. Machida, pp. 20, 38-39.

[64] Hinduism essentially dealt with the ultimate quiescent power center at the heart of creation, a set of metaphysical and religious notions psychologically allied to the goals of the renunciant who learned altered states of consciousness allowing withdrawal deep into noncognitive reaches of the mind. Hinduism tended to expect that this power center could not be truly fully experienced by anyone except a meditator or specialist, although non-meditators could interact with the periodic release of accumulated power, especially through contact with deities in darśana or in possession. (See, e.g., Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty, *Asceticism and Eroticism in the Mythology of Siva* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973).) Buddhism, on the other hand, dealt with the ultimately interrelated nature of all phenomena, a goal not essentially defined by withdrawal from ordinary phenomena but by an ongoing state of more fluid participation in them. In Buddhism, meditation aimed not to accumulate power but to open the mind to the world of interdependence. In short, the nonrenunciant approach has been in most respects actually more intelligible for Buddhism than for bhakti.

BOOK REVIEWS

STEPHEN A. GELLER, *Sacred Enigmas: Literary Religion in the Hebrew Bible*—London: Routledge, 1996 (VIII, 224 p.), ISBN 0-415-12771-8 (cloth), £40.00.

Among the new methods used in biblical studies, literary approaches, psychoanalysis, and feminist readings figure prominently. Until recently, these approaches were generally believed to supplement, rather than supplant traditional historical-critical ones. However, what no one has suspected even a decade ago, many adepts of biblical studies have now opted out of historical approaches believing, as they do, that there are not enough hard facts available to warrant the historical enterprise. Just attend any biblical studies conference in Europe, North America, or Israel, and you will find yourself in the turmoil of the relevant debates. Some of Geller's papers could well have given the impression that his interest is with "the Bible as literature" rather than "the Bible as history." However, the present collection of essays puts the record straight: Geller, and with him the biblical department of New York's Jewish Theological Seminary, is still interested in history. Geller belongs to those who, far from exaggerating the historicity of biblical traditions, stir a middle course between "too much" and "too little" history. The historical frame into which he sets the seven papers of the present collection is vaguely (but sensibly) the one which originated "next door," i.e., in Columbia University's department of Ancient History where, until recently, the late Morton Smith was the dominant figure. With Morton Smith (and, of course, Julius Wellhausen) Geller believes the book of Deuteronomy to provide the biblical canon with its leading voice, and that this book's insistence on the exclusive worship of one deity originated ultimately with the prophets. While Deuteronomy pushes the idea of God's transcendence to its limits (as Geller ably demonstrates in his careful reading of Deut 4), the priestly authors aimed at subverting the Deuteronomic rationalism by rescuing as much mystery as was still possible (see Geller's chapter on the "blood cult"). Geller emerges as an interpreter

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[79] For example, Nicolas-Antoine Boulanger, *L'Antiquité dévoilée par ses usages* (1766), Constantin-François de Volney, *Les Ruines des empires* (1791), and Charles-François Dupuis, *L'Origin de tous le cultes, ou Religion universelle* (an III [1795]). See Joscelyn Godwin, *The Theosophical Enlightenment* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1994), 33-37.

[80] See Godwin, *Theosophical Enlightenment*, 37.

CONTRADICTION AND THE MERIT OF GIVING IN INDIAN RELIGIONS

TORKEL BREKKE

Summary

The gift has been an important focus of research on Indian sociology and religion. However, almost all research has been confined to the Hindu tradition. I believe we can shed new light on religious giving if we focus on common themes in the main religions of the sub-continent. In this article I look at the textual traditions on giving in Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. My thesis is that these traditions share basic contradictions in their ideas of giving. There is, firstly, a contradiction between the gift as a sacrifice and a charitable gift and, secondly, a contradiction between the merit associated with giving as originating from the qualitites of the recipient and from the intention of the donor. These two contradictions are interlinked. Initially, they seem to threaten the institution of giving to the religious renouncer. If giving can be perceived as an act of charity where the merit accrues from the right intentions behind the act, there is no more reason to give to the renouncer than to anybody else. However, it seems that the contradiction also has been used to make giving to renouncers *a priori* meritorious. When the gift is perceived as a sacrifice to a worthy monk the merit accrues from the qualities of the recipient, but when there are no worthy recipients around the merit accrues from the right intention of the donor.

Gifts to Brahmins have been the focus of scholarly work on Indian religion, especially in anthropology. The most puzzling character of the gift in an Indian setting is its ambiguity. Several writers have pointed out that the Brahmin is reluctant to receive gifts. Manu has a long list of hells with telling names — "Excessively burning", "Crushing", "Iron Spike", "Forest of Sword Leaves" etc. — that the unlucky Brahmin must visit if he were to accept gifts from the wrong person.[1] The trouble with the gift for the Brahmin is that it forms unwanted bonds of dependency vis-à-vis the king, M. Mauss observed in his classic study.[2] But it is more to it than that. From the recipient's point of view the gift is potentially poisonous. The gift contains impurity, according to the writers who followed the Dumontian paradigm.

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Heesterman argued that the Brahmin officiant in Vedic times took over the death-impurity of the patron by accepting gifts, but that this role was fundamentally changed through the individualization of the ritual.[3] J. Parry says that the Brahmins of Benares become living sewers as they receive the death-impurity of mourners conveyed in the gift.[4] The poison in the gift is really inauspiciousness (nāśubh), says G.G. Raheja in an important challenge to the Dumontian sociology of hierarchy based on impurity (āśauca).[5] Thus, new generations of sociologists and anthropologists showed that Mauss had been unable to account for the uniqueness of the Indian gift because he did not grasp the peculiar metaphysics of impurity or inauspiciousness.

In volume 44 of this journal A. Michaels embarked on a critique of these writers "in an attempt to partially rehabilitate Mauss."[6] He wished to question the prominence of theories of impurity by comparing the śāstric theories of giving (dānadharma) with the theories of greetings (abhivādanadharma). Greetings, so his argument went, make bonds of dependency and may convey defilement just like gifts. If it really is the defilement of the gift that makes it so problematic, then similar rules and reservations should have developed for greetings. The fact that they have not — greetings are, on the contrary, always reciprocated — goes to falsify the theory that it is defilement which makes the gift troublesome. Instead, Michaels suggested, the gift is not returned and barely accepted because both recipient and donor strive towards an otherworldly attitude of altruistic generosity which is an ascetic virtue. It is not clear to me, however, that the ascetic spirit with its questioning of earthly possessions, which Michaels sees as the background to religious giving, actually can be ascribed to the most important donors: the merchants, townsmen and common people supporting Brahmins and monks. The householders' donations do not imply soteriological concerns. On the contrary they are motivated by a desire for merit which is, strictly speaking, a this-worldly currency. Giving away possessions in order to earn merit is a perfectly rational activity. I do believe, however, that Michaels is right in drawing attention away from the metaphysics of the gift and towards the motivational basis for giving. This will also be the

general approach of the present article. Furthermore, I believe, as Michaels also pointed out, that in order to illuminate these aspects of giving we need to devote more attention to non-Brahminical sources.

A very substantial part of what has been written on gifts in Indian religion is exclusively concerned with gifts to Brahmins. I believe that we would get a better understanding of the ideology that surrounds gift-giving in India if we realize that there are common themes contained in the texts — I am primarily concerned with literary traditions — of different religions in the sub-continent. There is a tendency in the research on Indian religion to ignore such common themes. I believe that this tendency is detrimental to our understanding of important topics. Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism have a lot in common. They share a general world-view where ideas of rebirth, *karma*, merit and *mokṣa* are central concepts. For example, as I will discuss later, the idea of merit-making was essentially the same among donors of Hindu, Buddhist and Jain affiliation during the late Gupta period. Many writers seem to be afraid to violate the uniqueness of any one tradition by making general conjectures. Of course, local differences abound and should receive due attention by ethnographers and historians. But the common themes should not be ignored either. Here the historian of religion has an important function in the study of India. By choosing an approach where fundamental ideas are compared across the boundaries of specific religious traditions we may be able to illuminate puzzling issues of scholarship from new angles. Gift-giving is such an issue.

It is already clear, then, that this article is a statement of method in the study of religion as well as an attempt to add to our understanding of the religious gift in India. The thesis I wish to put forward here is that the world-view shared by the traditions of renouncers in India — Brahmins, Buddhists and Jains — contains fundamental contradictions which threaten to surface in the ritual of giving and receiving. As became clear from the brief references to some of the earlier research this general statement is not original. To be more specific, there are two contradictions I wish to discuss here. Firstly, there is a contradiction in how the relationship between the giver and

the recipient is perceived. On the one hand, the gift is seen as a sacrifice and the renouncer has taken the place of the gods on earth. On the other hand, it is seen as a charitable gift and the renouncer is a beggar. Secondly, there is a contradiction concerning the fundamental ethics of giving. On the one hand, the qualities of the recipient are thought to determine the merit of the gift. On the other hand, the intention of the giver is supposed to determine the merit earned. These two contradictions are interlinked. They may threaten to undermine the relationship between the renouncer and the householder. If it is the intention behind the gift that determines its results for the giver there is no reason to distinguish between different types of recipients. Why, then, should anyone give to the renouncer? On the other hand, these contradictions seem to have been used creatively to invest all gifts with merit. When the gift is seen as a sacrifice the excellent qualities of the recipients are in the foreground. When the gift is seen as charity it is the good intentions of the giver which are highlighted. The good qualitites of the recipient ensure the merit in an act of sacrifice whereas the bad qualities of the recipient do not affect the merit in an act of charity. Gifts are never in vain if the giver can switch between the two alternative merit-making mechanisms as he pleases.

Gift-giving in Indian religion could be broken down and analysed in at least five parts. This is what the two main Jain traditions tend to do. They distinguish between the recipient (pātra), the giver (dātṛ), the thing given (dātavya, dravya), the manner of giving (dānavidhi) and the result of giving (dānaphala).[7] I wish to illuminate the relationship between the recipient and the giver. Therefore, I will limit my study to these two factors. I will refrain from going into the metaphysics of the thing given and engage in discussions about whether the giver gives part of himself in the gift and what sort of substance or quality may be conveyed.

My main material will be some central works on giving in Buddhist and Hindu literature: firstly, Pāli Buddhist texts, like the Khandhakas of the Vinaya Piṭakas, the Dakkhiṇāvibhaṅgasutta and the Petavatthu; secondly, the Dharmaśāstras, the Dharmasūtras and the

Anuśāsanaparvan and the Bhagavadgītā of the Mahābhārata; thirdly, I will look at some ideas about giving in Jainism mainly through secondary material. I will also use inscriptions to some extent and draw on relevant ethnographic material. By looking at these texts I only wish to illuminate the contradictions mentioned above and I have no intention of presenting an exhaustive analysis of the vast Indian literature on giving, a survey of which can be found in P.V. Kane's study of the Dharmaśāstra literature.

The Giver

Firstly, I will take a brief look at the giver in a Buddhist setting. In theory, the members of the Saṃgha are superior to the lay person in every way and they deserve unconditional respect and support. The lay person's potential power *vis-à-vis* the monks is suggestive of the ambiguous nature of their relationship. The Buddhist literature in Pāli has a number of different accounts that show how lay people have been in a position to influence not only individual descisions of the monks, but the whole structure of the Buddhist Saṃgha.[8] This power derives from the monks' dependency on the support of the laity. For instance, in the Mahāvagga X there is a story about a monk of Kosambī who is suspended for a certain offence. The monk does not accept his punishment and a group of monks takes his side against the group that has suspended him and a dispute arises in the Saṃgha. There are attempts to solve the dispute within the Saṃgha, and the Buddha is drawn into the problems, but the matter is not settled until the lay-followers of Kosambī also flex their muscles against the Saṃgha. They decide to put pressure on the trouble-making monks by withdrawing all their respect and offerings. From the Pāli literature it is clear that this kind of pressure from lay people had to be taken seriously. When in Mahāvagga I.43 (MV from now) a thief goes forth among the monks, people talk negatively about this.[9] The Saṃgha is forced to react to the criticism from the laity because they are materially dependent on them. In MV II.2 the monks gather on the fourteenth, fifteenth and eighth days of the half month. People

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come up to them to hear *Dhamma* but the monks sit in silence. People get angry and ask how the monks can sit in silence like dumb pigs (mūgasūkharā). To meet the negative feedback, the Buddha orders the monks to recite *Dhamma*. In MV I.25 monks go begging wrongly dressed and they are greedy and eat in an unbecoming manner. People react to their bad behaviour, and because of their negative reactions the Buddha allows preceptors. In MV I.32 the monks behave badly when their preceptors go away or die. They are subject to critisism and the Buddha allows teachers in order to meet the criticism. In the MV II monks walk around during all seasons including the rains, trampling down crops and grasses and destroying many little creatures. People react to this and as a consequence the Buddha makes rules for life during the rainy season. This sequence of events is repeated again and again in the Khandhakas with the standard phrase "People looked down upon, criticized, spread it about, saying: 'How can these recluses, sons of the Sakyans...etc." [10] The point is that there appears from the Pāli texts to have been a constant pressure from the laity on the monks to behave according to the rules. The tension between givers and recipients also seems to be a prominent feature of Theravāda Buddhist sociology of modern times. To persistently serve a class of human beings as semi-gods and watch them live in luxury and ease while oneself toils in the fields must lead to ambivalence towards the monks, M. Spiro observed about Buddhism in Burma.[11]

It is clear that the giver has certain powers *vis-à-vis* the recipients in Indian religions. Communities of renouncers are dependent on the society for their subsistence and the householders or lay people are in a position to withdraw support if the recipient does not satisfy certain criteria. On the other hand, the giver too must have certain qualities. Texts on giving from the Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain traditions emphasize that the person who gives alms must have the correct attitude towards the recipient. The Digambaras have established a set of qualities that should be present in a worthy giver of gifts. These are: faith (śraddhā) which means confidence in the results of the donation, devotion (bhakti) which means love for the virtues of the recipient,

contentment or joy in giving (tuṣṭi), zeal (sattva) in giving, disinterestedness or lack of desire for worldly rewards (lobhaparityāga), patience (kṣamā).[12] The Śvetāmbaras have several different lists of qualities in a giver. Among the qualities given by one such list, in the Tattvārthabhāṣya, we find the word *aparibhāvitvā*. This word is from the root *pari-bhū* which carries meanings like *be superior to, subdue, despise* etc. Williams translates *aparibhāvitvā* with *absence of condescension towards the recipient.*[13] In other words, the giver should have a frame of mind where he does not think of himself as superior to the recipient. The condescension which naturally arises in the charitable donor towards the beggar would undermine the structure of the relationship between monk and lay person if it were allowed to exist and be expressed.

Why does the giver give gifts? Indian religions share a belief in rebirth. When a living being dies, some part of it does not disappear with the physical body, but is reborn in a new state. If one has acquired merit, in Pāli *puñña*, one is reborn as a human being or as a god in a world of gods, *devaloka*. If one has acted badly and not acquired merit, one is reborn as a lower life-form or in a dreadful hell. Therefore, it is important to earn merit. In Buddhist texts there is often said to be three ways of doing this: *dāna*, giving, *sīla*, good conduct and *bhāvanā*, contemplation. Each of these is a *puññakiriyavatthu*, a thing which leads to merit. Admittedly, the issue of merit is not always explicitly brought out in Buddhist material on giving. S. Paranavitana has collected over 1200 inscriptions in Ceylon made between the 300 B.C. and 100 A.D. registering donations, often of caves, to the Saṃgha. Here donors give their names and often their relation to a member of the Order. However, no mention is made of the desire to make merit. If they say anything at all about their motivation the donors simply state that they give gifts for the benefit of the Saṃgha.[14] Respect for and devotion towards the Buddhist Saṃgha is undoubtedly an important motivational factor. Still, it is reasonable to say that the idea of merit-making is the metaphysical foundation of such donations.

The giver gives in order to acquire merit. Acquiring merit may lead to a favourable rebirth. However, in order to attain salvation in a real sense, one must, firstly, be reborn in the state of a human being, where neither pain nor pleasure is too overwhelming to contemplate salvation, and secondly, follow the right practice. This cannot be done as a householder. The Buddha said: "Vaccha, there is no householder who, without abandoning the fetter of householdship, on the dissolution of the body has made an end of suffering."[15] To attain Nirvāṇa one must first of all become a monk or nun.[16] However, says the Buddha, a very large number of householders have gone to heaven on the dissolution of the body. In the numerous inscriptions recording grants of land to Brahmins during the late fifth century the merit acquired from the gifts are thought to "erect a ladder leading to heaven (svargasopānapaṅkti)."[17] Another standard phrase accompanying grants is that the donation is given for the increase of the merit (puṇya) for mother, father and self and in order to obtain a reward (phala) both in this world and in the next.[18] Often grants of land are thought to ensure sixty thousand years in heaven for the giver, but merit is never thought of as leading to complete salvation. Against the ethics of merit and favourable rebirth stands the path of the uncompromising salvation-seeker. Whereas the lay person needs to do good acts, the ascetic aims at doing nothing. The essential question of what *doing nothing* really means is answered in different ways by different religions in India. Through some form of ascetic practice the monk or renouncer can stop the influx or generation of new *karma* and get rid of *karma* which has been accumulated from earlier action. To the ascetic merit is basically no better than demerit because both ties him to *saṃsāra*. The medieval Jain author Kunda Kunda said: "A gold fetter binds a person as much as an iron one. Similarily good or bad deeds performed bind the soul."[19]

Let us look briefly at some Jain ideals of giving to illuminate the difference between the ethics of the lay person and the ascetic. It has been noted that there is a paradox involved in the way that Jains practice the *dānavrata*, the vow of giving.[20] When ostentatiously donating costly gifts, wealthy Jains seem to be breaking the vow

of *aparigraha*, non-attachment to worldly possessions, J. Reynells suggested.[21] K.R. Norman has picked up this topic and tried to show that no paradox is involved.[22] There is no canonical injunction against giving openly, he says. One could also point out that several prominent Jain authors have listed ostentatious giving as the practice of a good layman. As R. Williams has shown, this is the case. In Digambara classifications of giving, *dāna* or *datti*, the concept of *samadatti*, gifts to equals, is one type.[23] According to the medieval Jain teacher Jinasena, the celebrated author of the Mahāpurāṇa, *samadatti* is the giving away of gifts such as land, gold, horses, elephants, chariots and daughters to a recipient who is equal to oneself in terms of status and piousness. Another medieval Jain author, Āśādhara, distinguishes between gifts that are made for the sake of one's well-being in a future life and gifts that are made for one's well-being in this life. To the last category belong the flashy gifts such as gold, horses, elephants and daughters.[24] The distinctions between almsgiving and ostentatious giving are not clear-cut. There is no reason why an ostentatious act of giving should be less meritorious as long as the giver has the qualities that are required; among which are, admittedly, disinterestedness.[25] Hemacandra, who sets the standards for Śvetāmbara *śrāvakācāra* with his Yogaśāstra, also seems to prescribe a certain degree of lavishness. If one does not sow wealth openly and constantly one cannot achieve the right conduct, he says.[26] As J.E. Cort has pointed out, it seems that we can get a deeper understanding of Jain giving if we realize that there is an alternative ideological framework that centres on well-being and balanced living in society, including, of course, piousness and almsgiving, rather than isolation and *mokṣa*.[27]

Giving produces merit for the giver. However, in some Buddhist texts we are told that it is possible to transfer to others the merit which is earned by giving to the Saṃgha. This is illustrated by the story of Nandā in the Petavatthu. Nandā was the wife of the householder Nandasena who lived in a village not far from Sāvatthi. Nandā was irreligious and disrespectful toward her husband, and when she died, she was reborn as a *petī*, an ugly and suffering ghost. One day

Nandasena meets the ghost who had been his wife in a previous life. At first, the widower does not recognize his beloved behind the terrible appearance of the *petī*, but when she tells him her story, he wishes to lead her home and give her food and clothes and let her see her children. However, Nandā knows that her husband would not be able to help her in a direct way.

> "What is given by your hand into mine does not profit me. But as regards the monks, who are abounding in the moral precepts, free from passion, and learned, / Regale them with food and drink and transfer to me the benefit of the gift. Then I shall be happy, blest in the fulfilment of all desires."[28]

Nandasena follows his wife's advice and makes abundant gifts to the monks and transfers the merit to Nandā. As a result she is able to come out of the world of *petas* and join her husband and enjoy food and wear clothes. The practice of merit transference clearly contradicts the Buddhist theory of *karma* which says that an individual is totally responsible for all his acts and must bear their consequences alone. One's fate after death cannot be influenced by others, according to canonical Buddhism.

It is the same for Hindu cosmology. According to Manu: "A living creature is born alone and alone he dies; he alone reaps the benfits of good deeds and the consequences of bad deeds."[29] Still, we find the practice of merit transference abundantly documented in Hindu sources. We have a large number of inscriptions from the late fifth century or the late Gupta period, collected by J.F. Fleet, recording grants of land to Brahmins. The motivation behind the donations are often explicitly stated and are essentially the same as in Buddhist and Jain sources. One Mahārāja Hastin has recorded a number of grants of land to Brahmins and he always gives the same motivation for doing so: he wishes to increase the merit of himself and of his parents.[30] The Mahārāja Jayanātha gives the same reasons for giving grants of land to Brahmins. It is for the increase of his own merit (svapuṇyābhivṛddhaye) and for the benefit of the feet of the Lord (Bhagavatpāda), i.e. Viṣṇu. One Dhanyaviṣṇu says that he has built a temple to Viṣṇu the Boar in order to increase the merit of his parents.[31] One Mātṛceṭa says that he has built a stone-temple

to the Sun in order to increase the religious merit of himself and his parents. But religious merit can not only be transferred over one generation. Almost all the records of grants of land to Brahmins state that the merit which is produced by a gift of land is not exclusive to the original donor but is shared by all his predecessors in so far as they do not reclaim the land, in which case they go to hell for an extended period.[32]

The Jains have always insisted that acts and their fruits are exclusively the responsibility of the individual. In the words of the tenth century *ācārya* Amitagati: "Except for karma earned for oneself by oneself, no one gives anything to anyone."[33] According to P. Jaini, the Jains have been able to keep out practices that contradict the individual idea of karma such as *śrāddha* and transference of merit.[34] Why did the practice creep into Buddhism? It has been suggested that the transference of merit in Theravāda Buddhism was a borrowing from Mahāyāna doctrine where *bodhisatvas* can save others by their enormous store of merit.[35] According to R. Gombrich, however, the practice of merit transference originated out of emotional needs to escape the responsibility of orthodox *karma* doctrine. By transferring merit one could improve the situation of dead relatives, and one's own state after death could be influenced in the same way. When dead relatives received merit, they were thought to say *thank you; anumodati*. Orthodox writers wished to integrate the practice with the laws of *karma*. They said that in reality no merit was transferred and the dead did not give thanks; they simply rejoiced in the good deed. *Anumodana* meant *rejoicing* not *thanking*.[36] However, the orthodox solution does not necessarily destroy all hopes that one can influence the *karma* of others. When one can rejoice in the good deeds of other people to the extent that one is reborn as a god, what does it matter that one cannot *really* give gifts of merit? This seems to be the attitude among many Theravāda Buddhists of today.

The Recipient

The first lay-followers of the Buddha were the two merchants Tripusa and Bhallika who chanced to pass by the place where the Buddha

was sitting right after his enlightenment. When Tripusa and Bhallika presented the Buddha with food, it was for *their* welfare, benefit and happiness for a long time (dīrgharātram arthāya hitāya sukhāya) says the *Catuṣpariṣatsūtra*. Moreover, the Buddha accepted the alms for the welfare of beings (hitāya prāṇinām). When receiving alms, the Saṃgha does the favour of giving the laity the opportunity of earning merit. Under special circumstances, the Saṃgha may refuse to accept the alms of a lay-follower. In Cullavagga V.20 the begging bowl is turned upside down on the lay-follower Licchavi Vaḍḍha, and he is suspended from eating with the Saṃgha. He has lied about the chastity of the venerable Dabba the Mallian and the Buddha decides the proper reaction. It is Ānanda who informs the transgressor about his punishment.[37] The Buddha has decreed that if a layfollower is possessed of certain bad qualities, the monks should turn the begging bowl on him, in other words, they shall refuse to accept alms from him. This means that he cannot earn merit, and one can easily imagine that it also means social disgrace. Evidently, the turning upside down of the begging bowl on a layfollower was quite a penalty, for when Ānanda told Vaḍḍha about the decision of the Saṃgha, the poor man fainted and fell on that very spot. Fortunately for the Licchavi, the Buddha allows the monks to turn upright the bowl on a lay-follower.[38]

The renouncers, whether Hindu, Buddhist or Jain, often seem to be under some sort of obligation to accept the gifts presented to them. In order not to accept there must be some fault in the giver or the gift that makes the giving valueless or harmful. The opportunity to give is at the same time an opportunity to invest in the future for the donor. What is given is thought to increase manyfold either in this life or in the next. In the Hindu Dharmaśāstra literature as well as in the Anuśāsanaparvan there is often some sort of association between what is given and what is received later as a result of the gift. If one gives a lamp, one may get good eyesight in the next life; if one gives a pair of sandals, one may get an excellent vehicle for travelling; if one gives food, one will get to eat in the world beyond; if one gives the gift of non-injury to beings, one will enjoy excellent health etc.

Gifts are investments, and their interest rates may be extremely high, if we are to believe Brahmin and monk writers.

But in spite of the obligation to receive gifts, a recurring theme in the behaviour and the ideology of the recipient is an initial unwillingness to accept. Here we touch on the fundamental ambiguity of the institutionalized giving. Marcel Mauss observed:

> "The recipient puts himself in a position of dependence vis-à-vis the donor. This is why the Brahmin must not 'accept' gifts, and even less solicit them, from the king, and would demean himself if he did anything other than take gifts." (Mauss 1993: 59).

For the Brahmin the gift is dangerous to accept, Mauss says, because of the bonds that are established in the gift. The same danger is found in Buddhism and Jainism. The monks do not solicit gifts, they only put themselves in a position where it is convenient to give them food. There is a constant need to maintain the fiction that the Brahmin, the ascetic or the monk is not dependent on the householder and that the asymmetry in the relationship between giver and recipient is the natural thing. The recipient reluctantly accepts what is offered as a favour to the giver. Laidlaw observes that for the Jains the giving to the renouncer does not really take place. By denying that *supatradan*, gift to the good recipient, is a *dan*, the householder frees the renouncer from any dependency.[39]

We saw that the giver is expected to possess certain qualities. The same is the case for the recipient. In his exposition of the Saṃgha the great Buddhist writer Buddhaghosa explains that a gift is something given with thoughts of the next world.[40] The wish and the possibility of aquiring merit for the next world by giving to monks is the basis for the institution of almsgiving. The idea of the Buddhist monks and the Saṃgha as a *field of merit* (puññakkhetta) is found in a number of Pāli texts, both canonical and post-canonical. In the Pāṭika Suttanta the Buddha says that the Order should be respected and revered and given gifts and homage; it is the world's unsurpassed field of merit.[41] Likewise, in the Saṅgīti Suttanta the Saṃgha is described as the world's unsurpassed field of merit.[42] In the first story of the Petavatthu the field of merit, embodied in one monk, provides the

opportunity to achieve a good rebirth in a seemingly mechanistic and straightforward manner. Here the elder Moggallāna sees a thief who is about to be executed. In order to save him from rebirth in hell, the monk approaches the thief and accepts a gift of sweetmeat and water from him, and because Moggallāna is an unsurpassed field of merit the thief is reborn in a world of gods. According to the Petavatthu, the Buddha explained how this is possible in the following manner: "Like unto fields are the Arhans; the givers are like unto farmers; resembling seed is the gift; from this is produced fruit."[43] Buddhaghosa explained the meaning of the concept of field of merit in his chapter on the Saṃgha.[44] He says that the Saṃgha is called *The world's unsurpassed field of merit* because the Saṃgha is a place where the merit of the world can grow. Just as the field where the king or his councillor sows rice or barley is called *the rice or barley field of the king*, in the same way the Saṃgha is a field for the growing of merit. The Jains also have the idea of the Order of monks as a field of merit. According to R. Williams the early Jain author Haribhadra uses the term *kṣetra* in this sense twice in his Dharmabindhu.[45] The great medieval writer Hemacandra enumerates seven *kṣetras* in which the layman should sow his wealth. These are Jain images, Jain temples, Jain scriptures, monks, nuns, laymen and laywomen.

The lay person can sow deeds in the field of merit, but the quality of the soil determines the harvest. In Theravāda Buddhism the qualities of the recipient of a gift are often said to determine the merit that the gift produces for the donor. For a gift to be efficient in terms of merit, the monks should first of all be of pure conduct. There is also the idea that the *longer* a person has been a monk, the greater is the merit produced from giving him alms. The Cullavagga IV is concerned with questions of purity and dignity of the Saṃgha in the eyes of monks and lay-people. For instance, one story tells about a group of monks who are constantly offered inferior food by householders because they are newly ordained and of little merit. One day these monks go to a meal and the householder giving the meal makes them sit on the porch and gives them only broken rice

and sour gruel. Naturally, the newly ordained monks are not happy about their treatment.

According to the Dakkhiṇāvibhaṅgasutta the Buddha distinguished between gifts to individuals and to the Saṃgha.[46] Gifts to individuals (pāṭipuggalikā dakkhiṇā) are of fourteen types. The first type is to a Tathāgata and the last type is to those who have been reborn as animals (tiracchānagata). Between these two extremes there are a number of different individuals to which one may donate. Gifts given to those reborn as animals increase a hundredfold, whereas a gift to a Tathāgata is meritorious beyond expression. The same hierarchy of recipients and merit are found in modern Burmese Buddhism. The feeding of a hundred dogs is equivalent in merit to feeding one human being, the feeding of one lay person is equivalent to one novice, a hundred novices equals one monk etc.[47] In the Dakkhiṇāvibhaṅgasutta donations to the Saṃgha are of seven types. These are distinguished by three criteria: whether the Buddha is the leader of the Saṃgha or the donation takes place after his death, whether one gives to the whole Saṃgha or only to parts of it, and whether it is given to monks or nuns. Never is a gift to an individual of greater fruit (mahapphalataram) than a gift to the Saṃgha as a whole. But, says the same text, gifts can be given by worthy donors to unworthy recipients because the gift is purified or hallowed (visujjhati) by the giver (dāyaka). Even if a gift is given by an unworthy donor to an unworthy recipient, it is still fruitful, says the Buddha. Here we are at the heart of the ideology of gift-giving. The Dakkhiṇāvibhaṅgasutta uses the contradictory ideas of merit-making to show that gifts are meritorious under all circumstances.

In Jainism there have been different opinions on the question, but in general Jains use a fivefold classification of recipients set out by the medieval writers Amṛtacandra, Amitagati, Vasunandin and Āśādhara. In their list the best recipient is the Jain ascetic, the next best is a Jain layman who is on his way up the scale of religious realization which at some point ends in monkhood, the least satisfactory recipient is a non-practising layman who has the right belief, a poor recipient is a person of righteous life but without the right belief and the wrong recipient

is a person devoid of both right belief and good conduct.[48] Another important Jain author, Somadeva, has a list of different recipients based on what aspect of the religion they specialize in. Astrologers and specialists in practical sciences is one type, orators and debaters and writers is another type etc.

A similar hierarchical order of gift and merit is found in Hinduism. Manu says "A gift to a non-priest yields the basic (reward); to someone who says he is a priest, double; to a teacher, a hundred thousand (times); and to one who has crossed to the far shore of the Veda, endless (reward). For a small or great reward for a gift is obtained after death according to the particular qualities and the amount of faith of the recipient." [49] This is a basic theme in the Dharmaśāstra literature. The Yajñavalkyasmṛti says that both asceticism (tapas) and learning (vidyā) must be present for a person to be worthy of a gift. A person who lacks either must not accept donations.[50] Right learning and right conduct seem to be two general qualities that should be present in the recipient of a gift in Hindu thought. Manu says that a king must ascertain the presence of learning and virtue (śrutavṛtta) in an ascetic in his realm. If these qualities are present, the king must protect him in every way, like a father protects a son.[51] When the king has confiscated the property of criminals, he may choose to give it to a Brahmin who is possessed of learning and virtue (śrutavṛttopapanna).[52] Like the sower who sows seed in barren soil reaps no harvest, so the donor who gives the offering to someone ignorant of the Ṛg Veda obtains no fruit.[53] Manu has long lists of those who are unworthy of offerings.[54]

In the Mahābhārata Bhīṣma tells Yudhiṣṭhira that a priest of the sacrifice (ṛtvij), a family priest (purohita), a teacher, a disciple, relatives and kinsmen can be considered worthy of worship and honour if they are furnished with learning and virtue (śrutavṛttopasaṃhita).[55] Other important qualities in a recipient, according to Bhīṣma, are absence of anger (akrodha), truthfulness in words (satyavacana), non-injury to beings (ahiṃsā), self-control (dama), sincerety (ārjava), absence of malice (adroha), absence of pride (nātimāna), modesty (hrī), patience (titikṣa), asceticism (tapas) and tranquility (śama). A person who has these qualities is considered to be the right recipient (pātra).[56] The

quality of *ahiṃsā* is often said to be a necessary quality of a worthy recipient of gifts in the Anuśāsanaparvan. Non-injury to others is associated with one's own health.[57] Moreover, the accepting of gifts is surrounded by a number of rules. If one accepts gifts without observing these rules, it will have disastrous consequences. "If he does not know the rules regarding the law for accepting material objects, a wise man should not accept (gifts), even if he is fainting with hunger. An ignorant man who goes about accepting gold, land, a horse, a cow, food, clothing, sesame seeds and clarified butter is reduced to ashes, as if he were wood." [58]

Spiro says that the Burmese have reversed the relationship between donor and recipient in that the merit in giving derives from the spiritual qualities of the recipient, not from the qualities of the donor.[59] As we have seen this is no reversal or innovation, but is an essential aspect of the idea of giving in Buddhism, Jainism and Hinduism. Perhaps the most telling examples of this are found in stories in Buddhist literature where thieves and murderers are reborn in heaven because they give gifts to prominent members of the Saṃgha.

Sacrifice and Charity

From the above we may conclude that there is a large number of rules pertaining to the giving and the receiving of gifts in Indian religion. But there also emerges a fundamental ambiguity. On the one hand, the gift is a sacrifice and the giver has an obligation to perform it. If the monks or the ascetics, who have taken the place of the gods on earth, refuse to accept the gift, it has negative consequences for the donor. On the other hand, the renouncer is a poor beggar who is completely dependent on the charity of householders. As T. Trautmann has suggested, gifts can be imagined in two fundamentally opposite ways. On the one hand, the gift can be seen as going upwards to superior beings. On the other hand, it can be seen as going downwards to dependants.[60]

The paradigmatic action in the Vedic worldview was the sacrifice, *yajña*. The most important sacrifices were complex and time-consuming. The relationship between the king and the priest, between

the sponsor and the sacrificer, was likewise the paradigmatic social relationship in ancient India. The Purohita functioned as the alter ego of the king in Vedic religion, H. Oldenberg suggested.[61] Through the merit acquired by the correct performance of the Vedic sacrifice the sacrificer made for himself, in addition to worldly benefits, a *loka*, in the Atharvaveda often called a *sukṛtāṃ loka* — the sphere or condition of those who have earned the rewards of well-performed rites — or a *sukṛtasya loka* — the sphere of ritual and religious merit.[62] The substantive *sukṛtam* denotes the merit, the positive results of the correct performance of the sacrifice. "This idea runs therefore in the ritual sphere of Vedism parallel with — or it is in this sphere the predecessor of — what in later times when the doctrine of transmigration has fully developed is, with a derivative of the same root kṛ-, called a man's good karman..."[63] Thus, in Vedic religion correct ritual was the means to make merit. This would soon change, however. When the idea of transmigration and repeated death was fully developed the idea of complete release from the cycle of rebirth came to be the ultimate soteriological goal and at the same time the Vedic sacrifice lost its significance. Perhaps around the middle of the first millennium B.C., there took place significant changes in the conception of the sacrifice. The Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad attacks the Vedic ideas of ritual. "Deeming sacrifices and gifts as the best, the imbeciles know nothing better."[64] However, wise people know, as the Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad says, that when one breathes, speech is offered in breath and when one speaks, breath is offered in speech. "It is because they knew this that people in ancient times refrained from offering the daily fire sacrifice."[65] The fire of the Vedic sacrifices burns inside the ascetic and it is there that the real sacrifices are performed. The ascetic, *saṃnyāsin*, is one who takes the sacred fire from the hearth and places it within himself. "By placing the sacred fire within himself, a twice born person should adopt the life of mendicancy," says the Samvartasmṛti.[66]

With the rise of Buddhism and Jainism the real sacrifice came to be the gifts to the order of monks instead of the traditional Brahminical rituals. In the Kūṭadantasutta the Brahmin Kūṭadanta approaches

the Buddha to learn about sacrifices. The Buddha tells him about bloodless sacrifices. Almsgiving and the building of monasteries are much better in terms of merit and easier to perform than the traditional sacrifices of the Brahmins, the Buddha asserts.[67] This idea is also found in Hindu thought. Manu says "What is offered as an oblation in the mouth of a priest is better than daily fire sacrifices; it is never spilt, dropped or destroyed."[68] But how can the giving of food to religious specialists be a substitute for sacrifice to the gods? Marcel Mauss believed that in almsgiving humans have taken the place of the gods. But, as he also observed, the giving of alms has a double nature:

> "Alms are the fruits of a moral notion of the gift and of fortune on the one hand, and of a notion of sacrifice, on the other. Generosity is an obligation, because Nemesis avenges the poor and the gods for the superabundance of happiness and wealth of certain people who should rid themselves of it."[69]

We have moved our focus to another aspect of gift-giving which has been little commented on in connection with Indian religion: charity. This topic is often met with in the Dharmaśāstra literature. The Atrismṛti prescribes charity thus: "He who gives food during famine (durbhikṣa); he who gives gold in a prosperous time (subhikṣa); and he who gives water in a forest fares gloriously in the celestial regions."[70] The Samvartasmṛti says: "By an intelligent person, seeking his own well-being, these gifts and others should be made specially unto the poor, the blind and other distressed persons."[71] Giving for charity has a long tradition in Jainism. The practice of giving to the needy regardless of religious and social affiliation is *karuṇadāna*, the gift of charity. The medieval Digambara writer Vasunandin says that one should give not only to monks, but to the very young and the very old, the blind, the dumb, the deaf, strangers from another land and to the sick.[72] Āśādhara, another medieval Digambara writer, prescribes the giving of food, water and medicines regardless of faith. The greatest of all medieval Jain authors, Hemacandra, also says that charity should be practiced toward those who have fallen into evil circumstances.[73] The *karuṇadāna* found in Jainism is closely related to another important religious vow of the religion,

the *ahiṃsāvrata*, the vow of non-violence, and to the *abhayadāna*, the gift of no-fear, which is an important aspect of *ahiṃsā*. The Yajñavalkyasmṛti lists the gift of no-fear (abhaya) among gifts that makes the giver happy (sukhī bhavet).[74] The Hārītasmṛti prescribes the vow of *abhaya*, non-fear, towards all beings for the person who is about to become a *saṃnyāsin*.[75] The Bṛhaspatismṛti precribes the protection of life (jīvarakṣaṇa). Beauty, prosperity and good health are the fruits of *ahiṃsā*, it says.[76]

The Dakṣasmṛti says that the nine sacred works are giving food to the manes, the deities, human beings, the poor, helpless, the ascetics, the father, the mother and the preceptor.[77] In other words, the gods, the ascetics and the poor are all essentially in the same boat because they depend on charity from humans who have wealth to give away. According to Manu, *dānadharma* is divided into sacrifice and charity, it is *aiṣṭikpaurtika*.[78] In his commentary on Manu 4.5 Medhātithi says that a gift given through compassion (karuṇā) cannot be counted as part of *dānadharma*.[79] Such remarks suggest that the experts on dharmasāśtra had problems with integrating the different strands of thought that came together in the giving of gifts. The blending of ideas of sacrifice and charity can be found throughout the literature on giving. In the beginning of the Anuśāsanaparvan Yudhiṣṭhira asks Bhīṣma where one finds the greatest fruit; in the sacrifice or the charitable gift. What gives the highest reward; that which is given on the sacrificial platform (antarvedyām) or that which is given out of kindness (anṛśaṃsatya or -ta)? However, Bhīṣma refuses to distinguish between gifts and sacrifices. He says that by doing an act of giving (dānakarma), one must think of oneself as performing a sacrifice (iṣṭa).[80] The Āpastamba Dharmasūtra is explicit in its identification of gift-giving and sacrifice:

> "This reception of guests is an everlasting (śrauta)-sacrifice (yajña) offered by the householder to Prajāpati. The fire in the stomach of the guest (represents) the Āhavanīya, (the sacred fire) in the house of the host represents the Gārhapatya, the fire at which the food for the guest is cooked (represents) the fire used for cooking the sacrificial viands (the Dakṣināgni)."[81]

The Āpastamba Dharmasūtra continues with a detailed account of symmetries between the different parts of food-offering and the sacrifices. The different actions during the meal given to a guest have exact parallels in the different actions during the sacrifice, just like the three fires of the sacrifice have their parallels in the fires of the stomach of the guest and the fires in the house of the host.

> "Food (offered to guests) which is mixed with milk procures the reward of an Agniṣṭoma sacrifice, food mixed with clarified butter procures the reward of an Ukthya, food mixed with honey the reward of an Atirātra, food accompanied by meat the reward of a Dvādaśāha, (food and) water numerous offspring and long life. ... When he gives food in the morning; at noon and in the evening, (these gifts) are the Savanas (of that sacrifice offered to Prajāpati). When he rises after his guest has risen (to depart), that act represents the Udavasāniyā iṣṭi (of a Vedic sacrifice). When he addresses (the guest) kindly, that kind address (represents) the Dakṣiṇā. When he follows (his departing guest, his steps represent) the steps of Viṣṇu. When he returns (after having accompanied his guest), that (act represents) the Avabhṛtha, (the final bath performed after the completion of a sacrifice.)"[82]

The sacrifice and the giving of food are identical in terms of merit. The same idea is found in the Vasiṣṭa Dharmasūtra, but here the body of a Brahmin is the sacrificial fire. When food is offered in the mouth of the Brahmin, this is the same as giving the sacrificial victim to the flames. "A Brāhmaṇa is a fire."[83] Again we are given a long list of parallels and symmetries between the gift to a Brahmin and a sacrifice. The body of the Brahmin is the altar, his mouth is the Āhavanīya fire, the fire in his abdomen is the Gārhapatya fire, and the Dakṣināgni is in his navel, the sense organs are sacrificial vessels etc.[84] Manu also says that the mouth of a priest is the fire in which one should offer sacrifices.[85] The Anuśāsanaparvan 152.19 says that a Brahmin is a god and the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa says that there are two kinds of gods: those in heaven and the Brahmins. Sacrifice is divided in two: oblations to gods and fees to Brahmins.[86]

The blending of sacrifice and charity is seen in practice in Aśoka's accounts of his own work for the propagation of *dharma*. In the fifth rock edict of Kalsi Aśoka says that he has established a completely new office in his state; that of the Mahāmātra. The Mahāmātras are

occupied with promoting *dharma* and in charitable work throughout the kingdom.[87] In a number of rock-inscriptions Aśoka lists support of *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* together with support of the aged and other types of charity, like kindness to slaves and non-injury to animals.[88] We can also see the blending of these ideas in inscriptions recording grants of land to Brahmins in the Gupta period. One donor says that the wealth (dhana) formerly given to Brahmins is like the remains of offerings to gods (nirmālya).[89] For this reason no good and sane man would take such wealth back and we may infer that this is the reason why the discontinuation of a grant is associated with extreme accumulation of demerit.

In conclusion, there are two different strands of ideas connected with the religious gift in Indian religion, both Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. On the one hand giving is sacrifice. The giver is a humble servant whereas the recipient is a god or, in a gods place, an ascetic, who is deserving of gifts and does the devotee a favour by accepting. On the other hand giving is charity. The recipient is a poor beggar who must be kept alive by the wealthy householder.

Merit and Intention

The sacrifice, especially in the Buddhist and Jain ideologies, became the ritual giving to the order of monks or nuns and this giving was essentially the same as charity. It was the intention of the giver that was the important aspect of giving because the intention produced merit. The ethic of intention is prominent in the major Indian religions. The *locus classicus* for this ethic is the Bhagavadgītā where Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna not to worry about his acts as long as his intentions are right. But the Bhagavadgītā does not escape the contradictions inherent in the ideas of giving. On the one hand it emphasizes intention. It applies the ontology of the three *guṇas* to both sacrifice and almsgiving and in both activities it is exactly the same qualities that distinguish the *sāttvika* from the *rājasa* and *tāmasa*.[90] In the sacrifice the desire to taste its fruits is the heart of the matter and, likewise, in giving alms it is the expectation to get something in return which

determines the quality of the act. When something is given in order to repay somebody or in order to enjoy the fruits of the act (pratyupakārārtham phalaṃ uddiśya vā) then the act is of *rājasa* quality. On the other hand, however, the Bhagavadgītā sees the sacrifice as the hub of a reciprocal relationship between gods and men. Gods and men sustain one another. In return for sacrifice the gods give the food of one's desire (iṣṭān bhogān), while if you enjoy their gifts without giving anything in return you are a simple thief.[91] For the Buddhists the basic causes of *kamma* were greed, hate and delusion; *lobha*, *dosa* and *moha*. "Monks, there are these three originating causes of action. What three? Greed, hate and delusion," says the Buddha.[92] To free oneself from the entanglements of *kamma* one must strike at the mentality of the actor. It is the intentions of the actor which is the motor in the continued production of *kamma* and of continued existence. This is also the case with giving. As regards the laity and their wish for a favourable rebirth, it is not the giving of alms in itself which is meritorious and produces fruits, but the intention behind the acts, says the commentator Dhammapāla.[93] In Jainism, the nature of *karma* is radically different from that of Buddhism. Still, it is the mentality behind the act that determines its results. For the Jains it is the passions that make the soul receptive to *karma*. The passions — anger, pride, deception and greed became a standard set — work as a kind of glue on the soul to which the substance of karma can stick.[94] Karmic dust would still be drawn to the soul but would not stick to it were the soul not moistened by the passions.[95] In the words of the sixth century author Jinabhadra: "For it is the intention which is the deciding factor, not the external act."[96]

But if this were the case, a lay person could theoretically give anything to anyone and earn merit as long as the intention behind the act was right. Why should anyone donate to monks, nuns or Brahmin renouncers when they could earn their merit anywhere else? There were two ways in which the religious specialists could argue that giving to them would be more meritorious than giving to anyone else. Firstly, they could say that there is a quantitative difference between the gift to the religious specialist and any other person. All living

beings would theoretically have a place on a scale of merit where the monk is on the top end. Secondly, they could say that there is a qualitative difference between giving to a religious specialist and to any other being. The first of these two solutions is based on the assumption that there are certain qualities in the recipient which determine the efficiency of the donation. We have seen above that this is a common view in Buddhist Pāli literature and in the ethnographic data on modern Theravāda Buddhism as well as in Hindu Dharmaśāstra literature and medieval Jain texts on giving. The second of the two solutions is based on a fundamental difference in the motivation of the giver. Medhātithi on Manu IV.5 says that the real *dāna* and *pratigraha*, giving and accepting, does not include donations made out of compassion.[97] J. Gonda has summed up this view thus: "What is given out of pity or sympathy is not, the same authority observes, conducive to transcendental results, because it does not fulfill the conditions of dāna."[98] In Ceylon, R. Gombrich was told by Buddhist monks that there are two kinds of giving: that which is motivated by respect (gaurava) and that which is motivated by pity (anukampāva). The first variant is exemplified by a gift to the Saṃgha, the second by a gift to a beggar.[99] The first, of course, is the best in terms of merit. Among Jains of modern Jaipur the ideas of intention and the qualities of the recipient are mixed up to make a heterogenous list of gifts (dan).[100] There are five types of gifts, the Jains say. These are: 1. the gift of fearlessness, 2. a gift to a worthy recipient, 3. a gift given out of compassion, 4. a gift given out of duty, 5. a gift given to earn fame. Laidlaw observes that the classificatory principles that underlie this list are divergent. The most important kind of gift, the gift to a worthy recipient, either a Jain renouncer or an idol, is classified according to the recipient, whereas the three last gifts are classified according to the motivation of the giver. The principles producing merit for the giver are completely different in the two cases. On the one hand there is the quality of the recipient, on the other hand there is the emphasis on intention. We may note that Hemacandra distinguished between gifts motivated by devotion (bhakti) and compassion (dayayā).[101]

In practice, both of these solutions contradict the basic assumption that the intention behind the act determines its fruits. Theoretically, perhaps, the second variant could avoid this contradiction by insisting that the fundamental difference of giving to religious specialists on the one hand and giving to any other being on the other arises *only* from the difference in motivation. However, in the cases I have encountered the explanation of the difference always involves references to the qualitites of the recipient. The ethic of intention clashes with the theories of merit-making.

I have looked at two sets of ideas about action and retribution which are fundamental to the world-view of Indian religions but which are incompatible. This incompatibility surfaces in the act of almsgiving. On the one hand we have the belief that the intention behind an act of giving determines its merit. On the other hand there is the idea that there is a graded or radical difference in terms of merit between giving to members of a group of religious specialist on one side and to all other beings on the other. The philosophy that classifies recipients according to merit is an ideology serving the interests of the religious specialists. The aspiratons to domination of this class rests on this ideology. If people do not believe in the special merit of giving to the renouncers, the renouncer will not receive alms. This has, of course, been clear to monks and Brahmins and they have worked to keep the ideology alive and gloss over its clash with the ethics of intention. By this I do not mean to say that they themselves have not believed in their ideology. Applying the theories of Anthony Giddens we can identify two main ways in which the ideology of the religious specialists gives legitimacy to the social structure of the relevant societies.[102] Firstly, the ideology of the religious specialists represents its sectional interests as universal ones. By assuming a subordinate position and giving the religious specialist alms the giver really serves his own interests according to the teachings of rebirth and merit-making. Secondly, the ideology denies or transmutes the existence of contradiction in their world-view by splitting the interests of the religious specialist and the householder into two different spheres. The householder should try to make merit by giving alms,

whereas merit-making is not in the interest of the religious specialist. Neither is the monk really interested in the wealth bestowed on him by the householder. The values of monkhood and householdership are incommensurable. Consequently, contradictions do not exist and conflict should not arise. As Dumont observed the gift is an exchange of material objects with no real value for spiritual goods.[103]

Conclusion

I started the article by saying that there is a common ideology surrounding the gift in the main religious traditions of India and that we should try to understand this ideology across these traditions. I also said that there is a tendency in the study of Indian religions to shun generalizations across different traditions even though Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism share a fundamental world-view which is sometimes best understood through a comparative approach.

The thesis of the article was that there is a common ideology of the gift in the Hindu, Buddhist and Jain traditions and that this common ideology contains two fundamental contradictions. The first contradiction concerns the imagery of gift-giving. On the one hand, the gift is seen as a sacrifice. On the other hand, it is seen as an act of charity. The second contradiction concerned the motivation for giving. On the one hand, the qualities of the recipient determines the merit achieved by the gift. On the other hand, it is the intention behind the giving which is important. These two contradictions go together. If the giving is seen as a sacrifice, the qualities of the recipient are naturally the focus of attention. If the gift is charity, the intention of the giver comes to the fore. These contradictions may, theoretically at least, undermine the relationship between renouncer and householder. However, it is interesting to note that these contradictions also can be used to interpret all gift-giving in a positive way. In times when there are no worthy recipients the pious layman can earn merit by giving with the right intention, according to Theravāda Buddhist ideology. In the future there will be monks in yellow robes who are of bad conduct (dussīla) and of evil disposition (pāpadhammā) who will be

given gifts for the sake of the Saṃgha, the Buddha says. Even then the gift will be of immeasurable worth.[104] The Dakkhiṇāvibhaṅgasutta concludes its exposition of gifts by listing possible combinations of worthy and unworthy donors and recipients. When the worthy donor gives to the unworthy recipient great fruit grows from the act. The giver purifies or hallows the gift (sā dakkhiṇā dāyakato visujjhati), it is said. When the unworthy donor gives to the worthy recipient great fruit grows from the act. Now, the recipient purifies the gift (sā dakkhiṇā paṭiggāhakato visujjhati). When the unworthy donor gives to the unworthy recipient there is great fruit although the gift is hallowed by neither. We must suppose, then, that it is the act in itself that is meritorious in this case. Finally, when the worthy donor gives to the worthy recipient the donation is, of course, fruitful. The giver always has a choice, it seems, between focusing on the qualitites of the recipient or his or her own right intentions. Giving, then, becomes meritorious *a priori*.

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[1] Manu 4.87-91. Doniger, W. and Smith, Brian K. (1991). *The Laws of Manu*, Middlesex. Penguin, p. 82.

[2] Mauss, Marcel 1993. *The Gift*. Translated by W.D. Halls. Foreword by Mary Douglas. London.

[3] Heesterman, J.C. (1963). "Brahmin, Ritual and Renouncer." *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Süd- und Ostasiens*, Band 7, 1963, p. 3 and 14-16.

[4] Parry, J.J. (1994). *Death in Banaras*. Cambridge, p. 123. See also Parry, Jonathan (1986). "The Gift, the Indian Gift and the 'Indian Gift'". *Man: The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 21.

[5] Raheja, Gloria Goodwin (1988). *The Poison in the Gift*. Chicago and London.

[6] Michaels, Axel (1997). "Gift and Return Gift, Greeting and Return Greeting in India. On a Consequential Footnote by Marcel Mauss." *Numen* 44, p. 252.

[7] Williams, R. 1983. *Jaina Yoga. A Survey of the Mediaeval śrāvakācāras*. Delhi. Motilal Banarsidass, p. 150. For a different six-fold classification belonging to the Hindu tradition see Kane, vol. 2, part II, p. 843.

[8] Brekke, Torkel 1997. "The Early Saṃgha and the Laity." *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, forthcoming.

[9] The term *going forth* is a translation of *Pabbajā*. It is a technical term which refers to the first of the two stages in the admission to the Saṃgha the second stage being the full ordination, *upasampadā*. *Pabbajā* (or *pravrajyā* in Sanskrit) can be used in a more general sense referring to the adoption of the ascetic life.

[10] *manussā ujjhāyanti khīyanti vipācenti: kathaṃ hi nāma samaṇā Sakyaputtiyā...*

[11] Spiro, M.E. 1984. *Buddhism and Society.* Berkeley and Los Angeles. California University Press, p. 415.

[12] Williams, op.cit., p. 153.

[13] ibid.

[14] Paranavitana, S. (1970). *Archaeological Survey of Ceylon. Inscriptions of Ceylon*, vol. 1, Ceylon.

[15] *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha.* A New Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya. Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi. Boston, 1995, p. 588-589. *Majjhima Nikāya*, edited by V. Trenckner. Oxford, 1948. Vol. 1, p. 483. The Kathāvatthu agrees that it is impossible to attain salvation as a householder. See *Points of Controversy.* Shwe Zan Aung and Mrs. Rhys Davids. London, 1979, p. 157-158.

[16] Although, according to the Cullavagga X, the Buddha initially refused when his foster-mother, Pajāpatī, asked him to let women obtain the going forth, several passages from other texts testify that women were seen as capable of attaining *Nirvāṇa*. For instance, the nun Saṃghamittā achieved salvation at the age of fifty-nine (Mahāvaṃsa, XX.48ff.) Saṃghamittā was the daughter of Aśoka and the sister of Mahinda. She went to Sri Lanka after her brother, bringing a branch of the Bodhi tree, in order to establish the Order of nuns in the island.

[17] Fleet, J.F. (1888). *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, vol. III, Inscriptions of the early Gupya Kings and their successors.* Calcutta, pp. 93ff.

[18] ibid., p. 179 and 189.

[19] Shri Acharya Kunda Kunda. *Samayasara.* With translation and commentaries by J.L. Jain. Delhi, 1990, p. 92.

[20] Reynell, Josephine (1985). "Renunciation and Ostentation." *Cambridge Anthropology*, vol. 9, no. 3, pp. 20-33.

[21] ibid.

[22] Norman, K.R. (1991). "The role of the layman according to the Jain canon." *The Assembly of Listeners.* Edited by Michael Carrithers and Caroline Humphrey. Cambridge, pp. 31-39.

[23] Williams, R. (1983). *Jaina Yoga. A Survey of the Mediaeval śrāvakācāras.* Delhi, p. 163ff.

[24] ibid.

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[26] Cort, John E. (1991). "Two Ideals of the śvetāmbar Mūrtipūjak Jain Layman." *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 19, pp. 394 and 395 and footnotes 11 and 14.

[27] ibid., pp. 391-420.

[28] *Petavatthu: Stories of the Departed.* Translated by H.S. Gehman. *The Minor Anthologies of the Pali Canon.* Oxford, 1993, p. 36 (second part).

[29] Manu, 4.240. Translated by Wendy Doniger and Brian K. Smith, *The Laws of Manu*, Middlesex 1991, p. 96.

[30] mātāpittror ātmanaś cha puṇyābhivṛddhaye. Fleet, J.F. (1888). *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, vol. III, Inscriptions of the early Gupya Kings and their successors.* Calcutta, pp. 93-112.

[31] ibid., p. 158-161.

[32] A large number of the records of grants of land quote a verse from the Mahābhārata to explain the significance of their gift. Typically they say "And it has been said by Vyāsa, the arranger of the Vedas — The giver of land abides in heaven for sixty thousand years; (but) the confiscator (of a grant), and he who assents (to an act of confiscation), shall dwell for the same number of years in hell! O Yudhiṣṭira, best of kings, carefully preserve land that has previously been given to the twice-born; (verily) the preservation (of a grant) is more meritorious than making a grant! The earth has been enjoyed by many kings, commencing with Sagara; whosoever at any time possesses the earth, to him belongs, at that time, the reward (of this grant that is now made, if he continues it)!"

[33] Quoted in Jaini, P.S. (1980). "Karma and the Problem of Rebirth in Jainism." In *Karma and the Problem of Rebirth in Classical Indian Traditions.* Edited by Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty. Berkeley, p. 235.

[34] ibid.

[35] Bechert, H. (1992). "Buddha-field and transfer of merit in a Theravāda source." *Indo-Iranian Journal* 35, pp. 95-108. Whether or not Theravāda Buddhism borrowed the idea of transference of merit from Mahāyāna, H. Bechert is right in reminding us that a monk may have followed Mahāyāna teachings while belonging to a Hīnayāna school in terms of Vinaya. It is monastical discipline, not philosophy, which makes the important dividing lines between different Buddhist communities. However, that Mahāyānism was suppressed in Ceylon later, is clear from the accounts of the Mahāvaṃsa.

[36] Gombrich, Richard (1972). " 'Merit transference' in Sinhalese Buddhism: a case study of the interaction between doctrine and practice." *History of Religions*, 11, pp. 203-219.

[37] Ānando...Vaḍḍhaṃ Licchaviṃ etad avoca: saṃghena te āvuso Vaḍḍha patto nikkujjito asambhogo 'si saṃghenā 'ti...

[38] *anu:'ānāmi bhikkhave imehi aṭṭhah' aṅgehi samannāgatassa upāsakassa pattaṃ ukkujjituṃ.*

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[39] Laidlaw, James (1995). *Riches and Renunciation.* Oxford, p. 316.

[40] *Dakkhiṇā ti pana paralokaṃ saddahitvā dātabbadānaṃ vuccati. The Visuddhi-Magga of Buddhaghosa.* Edited by C.A.F. Rhys Davids. London, 1920, vol. 1, p. 220.

[41] *. . .anuttaraṃ puñña-kkhettaṃ lokassāti.* Dighā Nikāya xxiv, 1,6. *The Dīgha Nikāya.* Edited by J. Estlin Carpenter. Oxford, 1947. Translation: *Dialogues of the Buddha,* translated by T.W. and C.A.F. Rhys Davids, part iii, p. 11.

[42] Digha Nikāya xxxiii, 1.11.xiv. Translation vol. 4, p. 219.

[43] *Petavatthu: Stories of the Departed.* Translated by H.S. Gehman. *The Minor Anthologies of the Pali Canon.* Oxford, 1993, p. 2-3 (second part).

[44] *The Visuddhi-Magga of Buddhaghosa.* Edited by C.A.F. Rhys Davids. London, 1920, vol. 1, p. 220. German translation in *Visuddhi-Magga oder der Weg zur Reinheit.* Übersetzt von Nyanatiloka, Konstanz, 1952, p. 258.

[45] Williams, op.cit., p. 165.

[46] Dakkhiṇāvibhaṅgasutta, Majjhima Nikāya, edited by Lord Chalmers. London, 1951, p. 253ff. Translation: Further Dialogues of the Buddha, London, 1927, p. 299ff.

[47] Spiro, op.cit., p. 109.

[48] Williams, op.cit., p. 152.

[49] Manu, 7.85-6. Translated by Wendy Doniger and Brian K. Smith, *The Laws of Manu,* Middlesex 1991.

[50] Yajñavalkyasmṛti 1.200-202.

[51] Manu 7.135. Edited by J. Jolly. London, 1887.

[52] Manu 9.245.

[53] Manu 3.142.

[54] 3.150ff.

[55] Anuśāsanaparvan 37.6.

[56] Anuśāsanaparvan 37.8-9.

[57] *. . .arogyamahiṃsayā.* Anuśāsanaparvan 57.19.

[58] Manu, 4.187-8, Translated by Wendy Doniger and Brian K. Smith, *The Laws of Manu,* Middlesex 1991, p. 91.

[59] Spiro, op.cit., p. 106-7.

[60] Trautmann, T.R. (1981). *Dravidian kinship.* Cambridge, p. 285.

[61] Oldenberg, H. (1894). *Die Religion des Veda.* Berlin, p. 377.

[62] Gonda, J. (1966). *Loka — World and Heaven in the Veda.* Amsterdam, p. 130.

[63] ibid., p. 125-126.

[64] Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad 1.2.10. Olivelle, p. 270.

[65] Kauṣitaki Upaniṣad 2.5. Olivelle, p. 208.

[66] agnimātmani saṃsthāpya dvijaḥ pravrajito bhavet. Samvartasmṛti 102. Edited and translated by Manmath Nath Dutt, New Delhi 1978, p. 344.

[67] Rhys Davids, vol. II, p. 182.

[68] Manu 7.84. Translated by Wendy Doniger and Brian K. Smith, *The Laws of Manu,* Middlesex 1991.

[69] ibid.

[70] Translated in Dutt, p. 325. The English has been slightly shortened by me.

[71] Samvartasmṛti 91, translated in Dutt, p. 343.

[72] Williams, op.cit., p. 157.

[73] ibid.

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[75] Hāritasmiti 6.5.

[76] Bṛhaspatismṛti 71.

[77] Dakṣasmṛti 3.8-14, Translated in Dutt, p. 443.

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[91] Bhagavadgītā 3.11-12.

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[96] Quoted in Laidlaw, James (1995). *Riches and Renunciation.* Oxford, p. 193.

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[98] Gonda, Jan (1975). "'Gifts' and 'Giving' in the Rgveda." *Selected Studies*, vol. 4, Leiden, p. 134.

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BOOK REVIEWS

LUC BRISSON, *Orphée et l'Orphisme dans l'Antiquité gréco-romaine.* Collected studies series, 476 — Aldershot: Variorum 1995 (viii + 301 p.) ISBN 0-86078453-3 US $87.50 (pbk.).

Among recent studies on Orphism which have followed the discovery of new evidence, a special position must be accorded to the reflections of Luc Brisson. He has dedicated numerous essays to the later Orphic literature, but above all he has attempted a comprehensive interpretation of the Orphic phenomenon which, while still considering recent contributions, has not abandoned the rules of an acquired prudence. These essays, spanning an arc from 1985 to 1992, are now collected in the volume *Orphée et l'Orphisme dans l'Antiquité gréco-romaine*, preceded by an introduction which traces their unitary theme.

The guiding thread of the book is the attempt to put the surviving fragments back into the context that is rightfully their own, in the conviction that they obtain coherence only in terms of the philosophical system in which they are embraced, notwithstanding the antiquity that it is possible to recognize in this or that element.

As is well-known, the bulk of the direct evidence on Orphism comes down to us from the later Neoplatonists. It was a natural tendency of the Neoplatonists to read Plato in a theological key and to base the validity of their reading, whenever possible, on illustrating Platonic expressions with quotations from the Orphic poems. Hence, Brisson points out the risk for someone who attempts to read Plato in the mirror of possible Orphic influences "to interpret Plato beginning from an already Platonized Orphism" (p. 5).

Nevertheless the discovery of the Derveni Papyrus, which has established the dating of some elements of the Rhapsodic Theogonies to the fourth century B.C., has re-opened the question that long seemed to have been closed with the sceptical critique of Wilamowitz and Linforth (cf. on this subject the recent *Studies on the Derveni Papyrus*, ed. A. Laks and G.W. Most, Oxford 1997). The dating of the Orphic Theogonies is once again fundamental as a key in which to read numerous Platonic passages, and more generally,

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PREDECESSORS AND PROTOTYPES: TOWARDS A CONCEPTUAL HISTORY OF THE BUDDHIST ANTARĀBHAVA*

BRYAN JARÉ CUEVAS

Summary

The Buddhist Sanskrit term *antarābhava* refers quite literally to existence (*bhava*) in an interval (*antarā*) and designates the temporal space between death and subsequent rebirth. It is apparent that, among the early schools of Buddhism in India, the status of this intermediate existence inspired considerable controversy. However, in spite of its controversial beginnings, the concept of the *antarābhava* continued to flourish and to exert a significant force upon the theories and practices of the later Northern Buddhist traditions. Questions concerning the conceptual origins of this notion and its theoretical connections with earlier Indian systems of thought have received little scholarly attention, despite a growing popularity of literature on the subject of death in Buddhist traditions. In this essay the possible links between the early conceptual systems of Hinduism (the Vedic and Upaniṣadic traditions) and Buddhism are examined to determine whether certain theoretical developments in Hinduism may have contributed to the emergence of the Buddhist notion of a postmortem intermediate period. The conclusion is drawn that the early Buddhists, in formulating a concept of the *antarābhava*, borrowed and reinterpreted elements from Hindu cosmography and mythology surrounding the issue of postmortem transition.

Death is perhaps best understood as the interval between dying and being dead, between a process and a condition.[1] In this sense death is an intervening moment and, in many cases, construed as a transition, a passage between states rather than a mere cessation or an 'experiential blank'.[2] As a transitional event (the most dramatic of its kind), death has "all the properties of the threshold, the boundary between two spaces, where the antagonistic principles confront one another and the world is reversed".[3] The threshold marks the border between two territories, between two worlds; the point of passage from the familiar to the foreign, from inside to outside, or from outside to inside. To cross the threshold is, therefore, to enter a new

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space, a new state or condition. It is often said that in passing over the boundary one wavers for a length of time between the two spaces, captured in a 'limbo', unfixed and vague. This moment of ambiguity together with its obscure symbolic and spatial dimensions defines the 'liminal' experience[4] and best characterizes the event of death. Indeed, in many societies death is understood as a transition from one state to another and is often associated with beliefs concerning the existence of a prolonged postmortem intermediary period.[5] Such notions are certainly found in early Indian Buddhist literature,[6] and traces of related notions can be uncovered in the numerous texts that make up the vast corpus of Brāhmaṇic and Post-Brāhmaṇic Hinduism.

In early Buddhism, the temporal space between death and the next birth is given the name '*antarābhava*' and is believed to be inhabited by ethereal beings composed of subtle types of the five aggregates (*skandhas*).[7] These transitional beings, called *gandharvas*, are said to wander for several weeks in search of their next place of birth. Often, the term *antarābhava* is used interchangeably to refer both to the postmortem state of transition and to the subtle entity that exists in such a state. Although the status of the *antarābhava*, as Wayman has demonstrated, inspired considerable controversy among the early schools of Buddhism in India,[8] it apparently did not even exist as a concept in the Hinduism of that period (first century CE). Does this fact suggest that the *antarābhava* notion was a uniquely Buddhist innovation, that such a concept emerged and flourished in isolation within the theoretical confines of Buddhist cosmology? If so, how might one explain Buddhism's appropriation of the Hindu *gandharva* as its postmortem transitional entity? I am willing to accept that the term *antarābhava* was perhaps a Sanskritic neologism coined by the Buddhists to refer quite literally to an existence (*bhava*) in between (*antarā*), but I am not as willing to concede that the concept behind the term was not already prepared for by the earlier Vedic and Upaniṣadic traditions.[9] In this paper I will attempt to locate and highlight those specific conceptual developments in Hinduism that may have contributed to the formation of the Buddhist notion of *antarābhava* as both a state and an entity, here identified as a

gandharva. In the process, my focus will be concentrated around Vedic and Upaniṣadic notions of the manes (*pitṛ*), specifically their spatial positioning within two distinct cosmological schemes and their symbolic associations with the moon, Soma and (re)birth/fertility—elements that also correspond to various mythic representations of the Hindu *gandharva*. As a point of departure we must first consider the role of sacrifice and its symbolism within the Vedic and Brāhmaṇic ritual traditions as detailed in the early textual sources.

Bodies, Vehicles, and Pathways: The Vedic Sacrificial Model

As a literary corpus, the Vedas are traditionally understood to be 'collections' (*saṃhitās*) of ancient revelatory knowledge, initially transmitted orally and later in written form. The oldest collection of these wisdom verses is the *Ṛg Veda* (*RV*), composed *ca.* 1400-1200 BCE and consisting of ten 'books' (*maṇḍalas*)—six 'family books' (books 2-7), containing hymns collected and transmitted by a different lineage of 'seers' (*ṛṣi*), and four later books, including both the collection devoted entirely to Soma (book 9) and the book of esoteric and philosophical speculation (book 10).[10] It is this latter cycle which provides us with specific insight into the Vedic conceptions of death and the potential destinies of the dead. In order to gain an understanding of the conceptual dynamics fueling these early speculations, it is crucial to review the essential components of the Vedic world view.

The Vedas operate within a sphere of reality organized into three distinct planes: the macrocosmic realm of divinity (*adhidevatā*), the mesocosmic realm of the 'sacrifice' (*adhiyajña*), and the microcosmic realm of the individual (*adhyātman*).[11] The intervening level, the 'sacrificial' plane, constitutes the realm of ritual activity, the fulcrum of the entire Vedic system. The 'sacrifice' is, therefore, the threshold event, the pivotal moment, between cosmos and human being; it connects the disconnected, orders chaos, and integrates the disintegrated.

As a result of its symbolic and spatial positioning, the sacrifice can be understood from either a macro- or microcosmic point of

view. From the former standpoint, the sacrifice is Puruṣa, the cosmic being, who is also known in later Vedic sources as Prajāpati. This primordial giant (*Ṛg Veda* 10.90) is both the victim of sacrifice and the deity to whom the sacrifice is dedicated. The dismemberment of the cosmic Puruṣa/Prajāpati effects the creation of the universe, which is to say that through the primordial sacrifice 'matter' passes from macrocosm to microcosm, from cosmos to human being; it is, thus, an anthropogonic event.[12]

From the viewpoint of microcosm the sacrifice, as ritual act, is the human individual. Through his 'death' (either real or simulated via substitution), cosmic unity and order (disrupted as a consequence of Puruṣa's sacrificed body) is created and sustained; a movement in reverse from microcosm to macrocosm—the true cosmogonic act.[13] However, because the creation of one always requires the disintegration of the other, the sacrifice must be forever re-enacted. In other words, each sacrifice repeats every other sacrifice; a perpetual cycle that when projecting forward always reflects back to the first sacrifice. The myth of Puruṣa's dismemberment announces what was done in the beginning; the ritual repeated by the individual assumes responsibility for reconstituting the primordially fragmented universe. "With the sacrifice the gods sacrificed to the sacrifice. These were the first ritual laws".[14]

The Vedic understanding of 'natural' death, as Lincoln has so carefully demonstrated, involves the idea of a transmutation of matter from bodily to cosmic form; the life-breath (*ásu*) 'entering' the wind, the body 'entering' the earth.[15] This "material translation from microcosm to macrocosm" is viewed as a "last sacrifice that all human beings perform, in which their very bodies are offered up to ensure the continued existence of the universe".[16] However, in the cremation hymn (*RV* 10.16), Agni is asked *not* to consume the body entirely, but rather to convey the deceased to his paternal ancestors (*pitṛ*) after the flames have done their work: "When you cook him perfectly, O knower of creatures, then give him over to the fathers. When he goes on the path that leads away the breath of life, then he will be led by the will of the gods".[17] The implication is that something other

than the body is led by Agni to the realm of the fathers (*pitṛloka*). Is a vague distinction being made here between body and 'soul'? Perhaps, but as Keith has rightly observed, "it is not altogether easy to derive from the *Ṛg Veda* a precise conception of the nature which was attributed to the spirits of the dead".[18] Nonetheless, I do feel that the existence of a 'soul' or 'spirit' is indeed being hinted at in these verses,[19] especially in light of a later passage which states that the deceased will assume a new (ethereal) body presumably in order to join his ancestors: "Let him reach his descendants, dressing himself in a life-span. O knower of creatures, let him join with a body".[20] And, in a earlier hymn, we read: "Unite with the fathers, with Yama, with the rewards of your sacrifices and good deeds, in the highest heaven. Leaving behind all imperfections, go back home again; *merge with a glorious body*".[21]

This notion of a separation from the material body and the adoption of a new 'body', with which the deceased 'travels' to the sphere of the manes, introduces an early variation of a theme present in later (Buddhist) concepts of postmortem transitional experience—that at death the 'soul', 'spirit', or 'mind' of the deceased (termed *gandharva* in some contexts) acquires a subtle body, and with it moves through an intermediate space between his/her former and future condition. In the context of Vedic presentations, this 'liminal' body is given no distinct features; yet we can surmise that it is at least associated with, if not entirely composed of, wind/air.[22]

The two expressions met with most frequently in the *Ṛg Veda* concerning the deceased's 'spirit' and, by direct connection, his/her subtle body are *ásu* (life, breath) and *manas* (mind). The latter term, despite frequent references in Vedic sources,[23] did not achieve conceptual maturity until it was further developed in the Upaniṣads. In light of this, the significance of *manas*, mind, will not be considered at this point. Here, we are interested, however, in the term *ásu*. Keith suggests that the *ásu*, though not explicitly identified with the breath, seems to have been based on the notion of the breath as the clearest and most "visible sign of life and intellect".[24] The *ásu* is what separates from the material body at death and enters the wind

(the breath's macrocosmic alloform): "May your eye go to the sun, your life's breath to the wind".[25] Later, the term *ātman* (breath) is the more common expression of the 'spirit/soul',[26] as in *Atharva Veda* 8.2.7: "Go thou to the sun with thine eye, to the wind with thy soul (*ātman*)".[27] Based on the homologous relationship between the breath and air,[28] it is not difficult to see how the 'spirit' (*ásu, ātman*) of the deceased, and his/her transitional body, might be understood as being both composed of and contained within the wind itself. It might also help to recall that in traditional Indian cosmology the wind is believed to occupy the mid-space between earth and heaven, the intermediate atmospheric realm (*antarikṣa*). The scenario can thus be summarized in the following manner: due to certain homologous associations, the 'spirit' and the breath are collapsed into a more or less impalpable substance, which is then conceived of as some 'entity' that, having left the material body, assumes an ethereal body and 'travels' the intermediate space between earth and the realm of the fathers.

It is true, as Knipe observes, that these early Vedic models do not offer concrete notions of a full-fledged postmortem intermediate being, since the belief is that "a complete new body awaits the deceased in heaven".[29] Evidence of disembodied 'souls' (*preta*) and transitional journeys through dangerous liminal realms does not appear significantly until rather late in the Vedic period, when such ideas begin to fully emerge in the ritual texts (*kalpasūtras*).[30] However, the language of some of these early Vedic hymns cannot be so easily ignored. In these hymns, we find explicit references to such 'threshold' notions as passage along death's 'highway',[31] union with bodies that travel,[32] or wandering 'spirits'.[33] Perhaps O'Flaherty is correct when she suggests that, in this formative period, the poets were simply trying out various notions of an afterlife.[34] At any rate, it is important to understand that the Vedas do provide a model, though often vague and ill-defined, of postmortem transition, of the deceased's passage from this world to one beyond; this transit is effected via the mechanics of sacrifice (cremation), a topic to which we must now return.

At the heart of the Vedic sacrificial system lie the extensive ritual discourses known as the *Brāhmaṇas*. Composed in the early

centuries of the first millennium BCE, these texts interpret and explain the underlying significance of ritual performance. They do not, however, describe what occurs in the ritual. Rather, they provide commentary on the reasons for, and specific consequences of, the proper performance of ritual activity and speech. Central to these explanations is the doctrine of symbolic and numerical equivalence (*saṃpad, saṃkhyāna*); that is, the sacrifice is understood in light of an elaborate system of homologies (*bandhu*) between all the components of the universe. Through knowledge of these correspondences, the sacrificer is capable of ritually controlling the cosmos. Such a principle is mythically substantiated in the story of Prajāpati's victory over Death, described in the *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa* 2.69-70.[35] I bring up this notion of equivalence and control only to point out the substantial role attributed in the Brāhmaṇas to ritual sacrifice as an effective 'instrument' of power for those who know its complex mechanics. Indeed, with the sacrifice, the ritualist is able to achieve extraordinary and dramatic results, including, for example, the ability to ascend to heaven.

Frequently, the Brāhmaṇas declare that it is the sacrifice itself which carries the ritualist upward to 'yonder world': "The Agnihotra,[36] truly, is the ship (that sails) heavenwards";[37] indeed, "*every* sacrifice is a ship bound heavenwards".[38] Relying on passages from the *Kauṣītaki, Aitareya,* and *Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇas*, Smith demonstrates that it is more common for the sacrifice to be compared to a chariot than it is to a ship:

> The introductory and concluding rites are likened to the two sides of the chariot and should be symmetrical: "He who makes them equal to one another safely reaches the world of heaven, just as one takes any desired journey by driving a chariot with two sides." [*KB* 7.7] Similarly, another text argues that the Agnihotra should be performed after sunrise so that it will be like a chariot with both wheels: "Day and night are the wheels of the year; truly, with them he goes through the year. If he offers before sunrise, it is as if one were to go with [a chariot with] one wheel. But if he offers after sunrise, it is as if one were swiftly to make a journey with [a chariot having] both wheels." [*AitB* 5.30] In other texts, other components of the ritual are connected to the parts of the chariot—the sacrificial fees are the internal fastenings [*PB* 16.1.13]; the chants

are the reins [*PB* 8.5.16]; and the recitations are said to be the "inner reins." [*AitB* 2.37][39]

We may recall that, in Vedic cosmology, the sacrifice occupies the mid-space between the human and divine realms; in fact, this intermediate level, this mesocosm, is identified as the sacrifice itself and called *adhiyajña* ('relating to the sacrifice'). As chariot of death, the sacrifice is what transports the sacrificer (the deceased) from the earthly to the heavenly realm. What is interesting about this is the relationship between the sacrifice as intermediary, the chariot as vehicle of travel, and the deceased as passenger; all three are marked under the sign of transition. In a system supposedly devoid of any explicit references to a postmortem intermediate 'existence', notions of postmortem travel should certainly look out of place. But, perhaps it is the case that such references actually indicate a pre-existing system of belief in which death is viewed as a gradual process, whereby the deceased is unable to immediately secure his/her place in the afterworld, but must exist, for a period, on the threshold between the two worlds. This is certainly the view held in the later period of the ritual sūtras, where, for example, we find descriptions of *piṇḍadāna* and *sapiṇḍīkaraṇa* as ritual means for insuring the deceased's safe passage from the dangerous condition of *preta* to the realm of the fathers.[40] It may be of interest, at this point in our discussion, to examine earlier descriptions of the deceased's journey to that world beyond.

A theme central to all Vedic accounts of the postmortem event, and, as we shall soon see, one that continues to exert its presence throughout Upaniṣadic literature, is that of the path by which the deceased travels. Perhaps the earliest mention of a pathway leading to the gods (*devaloka*) occurs in *Ṛg Veda* 1.72.7, where Agni, the deity of the sacrificial fire and hence the intermediary between earth and heaven, is addressed as follows: "Knowing the ways by which the gods go, thou (Agni) hast become the unwearied messenger, the bearer of oblations".[41] Later, the path is said to have been made by Yama, the lord of the dead and the first mortal to have reached the 'other side': "Yama was the first to find the way for us, this pasture

that shall not be taken away. Where our ancient fathers passed beyond, there everyone who is born follows, each on his own path".[42] Several verses later, the deceased is addressed directly: "Go forth, go forth on those ancient paths on which our ancient fathers passed beyond. There you shall see the two kings, Yama and Varuṇa, rejoicing in the sacrificial drink. . . . Run on the right path, past the two brindled, four-eyed dogs, the sons of Saramā, and then approach the fathers, who are easy to reach and who rejoice at the same feast as Yama".[43] It should not go unnoticed that these verses give some indication of what the deceased may actually *experience* along the way and in the realm of the dead. More elaborate descriptions of the world beyond can be found in *Ṛg Veda* 9.113.7-11:

> Where the inextinguishable light shines, the world where the sun was placed, in that immortal, unfading world, O Purifier, place me. . . . Where Vivasvan's son is king, where heaven is enclosed, where those young waters are—there make me immortal. . . . Where they move as they will, in the triple dome, in the third heaven, where the worlds are made of light, there make me immortal. . . . Where there are desires and longings, at the sun's zenith, where the dead are fed and satisfied, there make me immortal. . . . Where there are joys and pleasures, gladness and delight, where the desires of desire are fulfilled, there make me immortal. . . .

In the context of the Vedic period, the question of experience is an intriguing one. Fully developed accounts of an individual's experiences in the after-death state do not appear until at least the period of the early Upaniṣads. It is, however, quite interesting to consider the passages above in light of later descriptions of postmortem encounters. Take for instance these verses from the *Garuḍa Purāṇa*:

> On the thirteenth day, the soul of the dead is taken to the High Way. Now, he assumes a body born of the piṇḍa and feels hungry by day and night. . . . In the path beset with trees, with their leaves as sharp as swords, such tortures are usual. He suffers from hunger and thirst, tortured by the messengers of Yama. The departed soul traverses two hundred and forty-seven Yojanas in twenty-four hours. He is bound by the noose of Yama. He weeps as he leaves the house for the city of Yama. . . . In his upward journey he passes over the best of cities. . . . On the thirteenth day seized by the servants of Yama, and all alone, the departed soul traverses the path like a monkey led by the juggler. As he goes along the

path, he cries aloud repeating: "O my son, O my son, I am undone, alas, I am undone. I did not act well."[44]

As seen here in this passage, the transition from this life to the next is not always a pleasant one. Symbolic forms of manifest anxiety often assert themselves in threshold situations, when a gap between categorical boundaries opens wide to expose raw and unwieldy realities. Indeed, that which falls between well-defined boundaries is almost everywhere regarded as dangerous.[45] In the Vedic texts as well, the path to heaven is envisioned as being quite perilous. "'Dangerous indeed are the paths that lie between heaven and earth' [*ŚB* 2.3.4.37]; for on either side of these roadways are eternally burning flames which 'scorch him who deserves to be scorched and allow him to pass who deserves to pass' [*ŚB* 1.9.3.2]."[46] The idea, expressed throughout the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*,[47] that the dead are punished or rewarded according to their (ritual) deeds indicates, perhaps, the presence of an early form of the notion of moral retribution. However, we should not be fooled into asserting that such ideas were prevalent at the time of the Brāhmaṇas. As Keith presents it, the more characteristic attitude of the Vedic world view, including the Brāhmaṇas, is "that it is a good thing to behold the light of the sun, and to live a hundred years, for which prayers and spells alike are earnestly resorted to, and that, at the end of the life one attains, there will be another, if different yet analogous, life in the world to come with the same pleasures as on earth, but without the disadvantages of human imperfection".[48]

As early as the *Ṛg Veda*, the road travelled by the dead is separated into two distinct paths:[49] one leading to the gods and another to the fathers—"Go away, death, by another path that is your own, different from the road of the gods".[50] In this early period, however, the distinction between the two realms is rather vague. It is not until the early Upaniṣads that we begin seeing a clear division, in which the world of the ancestors is said to be associated with the moon, darkness, sacrificial activity, and rebirth; the heavenly realm with the sun, light, knowledge, and immortality.[51] The *pitṛloka*, as conceived in the Vedas and Brāhmaṇas, is frequently evoked as the prime goal of the sacrificer (the deceased). Yet, at this stage, both the divine

realm (*devaloka*) and the world of the fathers often appear somehow to co-exist, which is to say that there seems to have been a confusion regarding their exact location. At some point (perhaps prior to, but certainly by the time of, the first Upaniṣads), the realm of the fathers became associated with the atmospheric mid-space between earth and heaven.[52] The path that the deceased previously used to reach this obscure realm beyond later developed a fork and branched off into two directions; one road led directly to heaven, the other crossed over into a murky intermediate realm. This transitional space, we are told, is reached by those who have 'conquered the world' by "sacrificial offerings, charity and austerity";[53] that is, by those who have diligently followed, throughout their lives, the laws of the Vedic sacrificial system. What had happened was that the ritual models of the Brāhmaṇas had lost their hold and a new paradigm emerged, in which knowledge became the premier instrument of power and control.[54] With this new model came the concept of 'self', and from this, the notion that each 'self' (person) lives a series of lives (*saṃsāra*); that the moral quality of the person's actions performed previously determines the quality of experience in the next life (*karma*); and that the person who possesses the correct knowledge can escape the cycle of rebirth and achieve some ill-defined ultimate state (*mokṣa*).

Olivelle has argued that this great paradigm shift occurred as a result of significant socioeconomic changes in sixth century India, most notably the growth of urban centers.[55] The rise of urbanization contributed to the emergence of individualist ideologies that "permitted the creation of the first voluntary religious organizations in India"[56] and set the stage for the development of religious ideas distinct from those of the Brāhmaṇic sacrificial hegemony. It was from within this diversifying religiocultural climate that Buddhism arose as an alternative tradition competing with Brāhmaṇism for the role of the ultimate legitimating religious ideology. This detail may help us appreciate that the "new" traditions that emerged during this period, and particularly the religion of the Upaniṣads and of the early Buddhists, shared similar sociohistorical backgrounds and the common thoughts and values explicit in those sources. The issue of shared traditions

is significant if we are to better understand the specific concepts that the later Buddhist traditions developed from these earlier models.

In summarizing, the point that must be stressed here in the context of our specific interest is that, within the Brāhmaṇic tradition up through the sixth century BCE, we do find notions of death as a transitional event and of postmortem travel along a pathway to a world beyond, a world inhabited both by gods and by recently deceased relatives. These notions are maintained into the period of the Upaniṣads where they are reformulated in light of the new paradigms that had begun to take root. In the next section, we shall consider these same ideas as they are expressed in the earliest Upaniṣadic sources, focusing primarily on the shifting cosmological position of the *pitṛloka* and the symbolism associated with this realm's falling fathers.

Shifting Ideologies, Falling Fathers: The Upaniṣadic Model

The classic Upaniṣads represent the culmination of Vedic revelatory wisdom (*śruti*). As a corpus of speculative theory, they rely upon the preceding portions of the Veda to which they belong, and yet maintain total independence and freedom from Brāhmaṇic ritual ideology. Central to the Upaniṣads is the notion of the nonduality of self (*ātman*) and absolute (*Braman*) and the significance of profound insight (gnosis) into the nature of this identity. The emphasis placed on knowledge in the Upaniṣads stands in stark contrast to the Vedic stress on meticulous execution of ritual without gnosis. In fact, the Upaniṣads stand against and devalue 'ritual' (a broad label specifying the central Vedic activity of offering sacrifice), reducing the whole of Vedic religious activity to an inferior position within its broader soteriological scheme while elevating its own gnoseological project.[57] For our purposes, it is important to note here that the Upaniṣads separate the 'path of works' (sacrificial activity) from the 'path of knowledge'. The former, it is believed, results in a lengthy life on earth and, at death, leads to a heavenly world beyond in the company of gods and fathers. Inasmuch as it requires sacrifice—understood in the Upaniṣads as being a principal cause of human

bondage and suffering—the ritual path represents an obstacle to liberation (*mokṣa*). The path of knowledge, on the other hand, leads to the highest goal, unity with Brahman and deliverance from the ongoing cycle of earthly existence (*saṃsāra*). When considered in light of the Upaniṣadic notion of death and rebirth, we find that the two paths correspond to the ascent and descent of the soul, respectively. Given that the fate of the soul is conditioned and determined by either the deceased's knowledge (*vidyā*) or conduct (*karma*) in his/her previous existence, those who do good become good and those who do evil become evil.[58] The individual who has sacrificed and performed works of public service (i.e., the good Brahmin ritualist) attains the heavenly realm of the manes (*pitṛloka*) and then returns to this world, while the one who knows the nondual nature of self and Brahman attains the realm of the gods (*devaloka*) and deliverance from repeated birth. With this split between *pitṛloka* and *devaloka*/liberation, the former relegated to a position below the latter, we arrive at the core of what I would now like to explore in more detail; namely, the significance of the Upaniṣadic displacement of the ancestors (exemplars of the Vedic world) and their symbolic relationship to the moon, darkness, and rebirth. To begin, let us consider one of the earliest, and most famous, formulations of the doctrine of the transmigration of souls from the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*:

> Those who know this, and those who worship in the forest, concentrating on faith and asceticism, they are born into the flame, and from the flame into the day, and from the day into the fortnight of the waxing moon, and from the fortnight of the waxing moon into the six months during which the sun moves north; from these months, into the year; from the year into the sun; from the sun into the moon; from the moon into lightning. There a Person who is not human leads them to the ultimate reality. This is the path that the gods go on.
>
> But those who worship in the village, concentrating on sacrifice and good works and charity, they are born into the smoke, and from the smoke into the night, and from the night into the other fortnight [the dark half of the month], and from the other fortnight into the six months when the sun moves south. They do not reach the year. From these months they go to the world of the fathers, and from the world of the fathers to space, and from space to the moon. That is king Soma. That is the food of the gods. The gods eat that.

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> When they have dwelt there for as long as there is a remnant (of their merit), then they return along that very same road that they came along, back into space; but from space they go to wind, and when one has become wind he becomes smoke, and when he has become smoke he becomes mist; when he has become mist, he becomes a cloud, and when he has become a cloud, he rains. These are then born here as rice, barley, plants, trees, sesame plants, and beans. It is difficult to move forth out of this condition; for only if someone eats him as food and then emits him as semen, he becomes that creature's semen and is born.[59]

In considering this passage, I want to narrow the focus and concentrate primarily on the descriptive components of the path that leads to the realm of the fathers (*pitryāna*). Those verses concerning the path of the gods (*devāyana*) have been quoted simply in order that the latter material might be viewed within its proper context. Let us start by extracting the elements that will drive the remainder of this discussion.

Contained within the *Chāndogya's* description of the *pitryāna*, we encounter several significant signs, each corresponding to one another and possessing an intuitive cogency. In order of occurrence, they are sacrifice, smoke, night, fathers, space, moon, Soma, wind, mist, cloud, rain, vegetation, and semen. If we then arrange these components according to their associative content into five categories, we have the following: Vedic ritual (sacrifice, smoke), darkness (night, moon, and by connection, Soma), atmosphere (space, wind), moisture (mist, cloud, rain), and fertility/growth (fathers, semen, vegetation). As discussed briefly above, a connection is drawn in the Upaniṣads between Vedic sacrificial activity and the path of the paternal ancestors. Indeed, despite the emergence of radically new conceptual paradigms, the belief that the performance of ritual sacrifice leads to the world of the fathers is never abandoned in these early Upaniṣadic sources. 'Sacrifice', therefore, can be understood as an alloform, so to speak, of both Vedism and the manes. In the context of the physical dynamics of the sacrifice, we can extend the association to include fire and smoke. Transformed by fire (*agni*),[60] the sacrificial oblation—*soma* in life, the body at death—passes into the 'smoke',

and from the smoke into the 'night'. From these associations, we are lead into our second category, 'darkness'.

We have already noted in some detail that, in Vedic cosmology, the chief place of the dead is the heavenly abode, a realm inhabited by gods and fathers. At death, the 'soul' exits the body and, by the fathers' path, arrives in a divine world pervaded by the lustre of the gods. Heaven, the transcendent goal of the Brāhmaṇic ritualist, is always associated with light and the sun's brilliance.[61] However, in the later Upaniṣadic conceptions, the move toward a radical separation of the realm of the gods from that of the fathers, seen here in the above quote from the *Chāndogya*, redefines the symbolism of the two worlds and introduces into its doctrine of the transmigration of souls the central dichotomy of light and darkness. The *devaloka*, inasmuch as it represents the purity of Brahman, the absolute, continues to be associated with radiant light; the realm of the *pitaras*, falling to an inferior position, becomes the intermediary world of darkness. The *pitṛloka*, at once the pure goal of those seeking immortality, has now become the "way station in the recycling of souls".[62]

In keeping with this theme of darkness, we see that the soul, *en route* to the world of the paternal ancestors, travels by way of the moon. The moon, an ever-present motif in Indian mythology, is often a symbol both of death and regeneration; its periodic waxing, waning, and disappearance can very easily be understood in light of "the universal law of becoming, of birth, death and rebirth".[63] And, as Eliade has observed, "the moon is the first of the dead. For three nights the sky is dark; but as the moon is reborn on the fourth night, so shall the dead achieve a new sort of existence".[64] These 'dead' who are destined to achieve a new life on earth are none other than the souls of those who, having diligently performed sacrifice and good works in the previous life, but have not gained the 'light' of knowledge, travel the darkened path of the fathers; a path conceived in the Upaniṣads as being the lunar journey of the soul during the "dark half of the month" when the celestial body is periodically 'dying'.[65] The moon is thus the door to the paternal realm of the dead and, because it is forever renewed, it gives second birth "back to those

who come to it and address it properly" by nourishing them with its divine nectar (*soma*).[66]

In consideration of its nourishing capacity, we should take note of the moon's connections to moisture (rain), vegetation, and fertility. Gonda suggests that these connections

> supposed by many peoples to exist between the moon, rain (*candramaso vai vṛṣṭir jāyate* "rain comes from the moon" AiB. 8, 28, 15) and plant life were deduced from their being subject to recurring cycles which were held to be governed by the movements of the celestial body which in 'primitive' and archaic thought stands for perpetual renewal, from the influence on the growth of living beings attributed to it, and from the conviction that the moon has control of all water and moisture.[67]

We have already seen that the soul, following the path of the fathers, travels to the moon, and from the moon falls back down upon the earth as rain to be (re)born again in plant form. But how to interpret the moon's fertilizing power? The answer lies in the associated symbolism of the moon's vitalizing substance, Soma.

This Soma, which in the Vedas denotes not only the fluid draught of immortality but also the juice of a plant offered in libations to the deities of the sacrifice, comes explicitly, in the post-Vedic period, to be a name of the moon.[68] It is true, nevertheless, that Soma's connection to the moon had already been forseen in the early Brāhmaṇas. In this context, Soma was considered to be of heavenly origin and identified as a lunar deity.[69] As a substance, it became seen as the moon's nectar (*amṛta*), and by extension the vital juice (*rasa*) of life, both animal and vegetable.[70] Soma's identification with the 'sap of life' is linked to that aspect of the moon's symbolism whereby the celestial body is seen as having control over all water and life-bearing moisture. "Being of heavenly descent", the moon's *rasa* (Soma) "makes its presence felt in all plants, animals and human beings".[71] But, Soma is not only the essential life-bearing moisture of the heavens, it is also "the generative force of all male beings", or rather, semen (*Taittirīya Saṃhitā* 7.4.18.2).[72] In this connection, we discover an associative link between the moon and fertility; the final link in our

chain of discussion concerning the Upaniṣadic network of symbols surrounding the soul's journey to the realm of the fathers.

To summarize thus far: In the early Vedic period, a lengthy and blissful existence in the radiant divine realm of the fathers (*deva-/pitṛloka*) was the ultimate goal of the Brahmin sacrificial ritualist. When, as a result of various ideological shifts, the nondualist gnoseological project of the Upaniṣads emerged in the sixth century BCE, the ritual mechanics of the Brāhmaṇic world was relegated to an inferior position within the larger Upaniṣadic soteriological scheme, organized around the central concepts of rebirth and final deliverance. Following the movement of this paradigm shift, the cosmological position of the *pitṛloka* (representing the entire Brāhmaṇic universe) fell and the *pitaras* became, in some sense, the intermediaries between heaven (*Brahmaloka*, formerly the *devaloka*) and earth. In the process, the soul's journey to the world of the fathers became associated with darkness and was described in terms of the moon's course during its periodic 'death'. Once connected to the moon, this journey of the soul was seen to culminate in rebirth on earth, first in the form of moisture (rain), then in the form of plants and trees, and then, having been consumed by animals, in the form of male semen to be finally (re)born a human being, but only to start the cycle all over again. Having established connections between the moon, which governs the waters and sponsors the growth of living beings, the Soma that is these waters as well as the essential power behind the cyclical processes of fertility, and the dead, particularly those souls traveling the shadowy path of the fathers and fated to return, we can now widen our focus and explore how these connections may have influenced the early Buddhist notion of the state of postmortem transition (*antarābhava*) and the beings that are said to be its subjects, the *gandharvas*.

Spirits in the Space Between: The Vedic Gandharva

In the Vedas and Brāhmaṇas, *gandharvas* are said to be semi-divine beings who dwell in the atmospheric mid-space (*antarīkṣa*) between

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earth and heaven.[73] They are affiliated with Soma whose home, as we have noted, is in the heavens; he "guards his home"[74]; "he rises high to the heaven's fault, beholding all his (Soma's) varied forms".[75] The *gandharvas* are renowned for protecting this divine drink, which, together with Parjanya, the rain-god, and the daughter of the Sun, they stole from the gods.[76] The Brāhmaṇic sources recount how Soma remained with the *gandharvas*, and how the *gandharva* Vivāsvant (the Vedic father of Yama and Yamī) had stolen the vital juice. At that point the gods and *ṛṣis* desired the Soma for themselves, and knowing that the *gandharvas* covet women,[77] they bought the sap from them for the price of a divine woman, the goddess Vāc (speech).[78] No doubt, as a consequence of their associations with Soma, the *gandharvas* are also described as "knowing plants".[79] Recall that Soma is, among other things, the essential vital fluid present in all forms of life, both vegetable and animal.

In a similar vein, the *gandharvas* are occassionally associated with the waters. The *gandharva* as 'divine youth' and the nymph of the waters are alluded to as the parents of Yama and Yami (*RV* 10.10.4). MacDonnell notes that, in the *Rg Veda* (9.86.36), Soma poured into water is called "the *gandharva* of the waters", and also in the *Atharva Veda* (2.2.3 and 4.37.12), the *gandharvas*, together with the *apsarases*, are said to dwell in the waters.[80] Perhaps, to respond to Oldenberg, the *gandharva* may indeed be linked (in part due to his connection with the fertilizing Soma) to both the celestial water of the clouds and the waters of the earth.[81] In fact, Sāyaṇa, glossing *Rg Veda* 8.77.5 in which Indra is said to have cut down the *gandharva* from the celestial region so as to protect the Brāhmaṇas, takes the word '*gandharva*' to mean 'cloud' (*gāmudakaṃ dhārathatīti gandharvo meghaḥ*).[82] From these connections, we can suggest that the *gandharva's* affiliation with Soma as life-bearing moisture should also include the divine sap's secondary identity as generative fluid, related intimately to sexuality and fertility.

As attractive semi-divine youths, the *gandharvas* are the natural lovers of the graceful and aquatic *apsarases*.[83] In this amorous capacity, the *gandharva* is affiliated with the wedding ceremony, and

the unmarried bride is said to be possessed by him as well as by Soma and Agni.[84] Consequently, the *gandharva* (Viśvāvasu), during the first few days of marriage, is regarded as the irritating rival of the jealous husband: "Go away from here! For this woman has a husband.... Go away from here, Viśvāvasu, we implore you as we bow. Look for another girl, willing and ready. Leave the wife to unite with her husband".[85] Lovers and seducers of women, the *gandharvas* are often described as enjoying an active sex life.[86] It is in this context, I suppose, that the *Śānkhāyana Gṛhyasūtra* (1.19.2) identifies the female genitals as the mouth of the *gandharva* Viśvāvasu. Moreover, always given over to pleasure, they are fond of scents (*gandha*)[87] and scented objects and are described as wearing fragrant (*surabhi*) garments; hence the name *gandharva*, "eaters of scent".[88] As sexually virile beings, the *gandharvas*, together with their female companions, the *apsarases*, are believed to preside over fertility and are petitioned by those desiring progeny.[89] Following the trajectory of this theme, the Buddhists, in a later period, name that being *gandharva* (Pali, *gandhabba*) who, upon departing from its previous existence, enters the womb and becomes an embryo at the moment of conception; its passage recognized as an autonomous transitional period (*antarābhava*) between the end of one life and the beginning of the next.

Intermediate States, Transitional Beings: The Buddhist Antarābhava

The concept of an autonomous postmortem intermediate period between lives can be found in both the Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna sūtras and their commentaries.[90] Unfortunately, it has been the case that research in Buddhist studies devoted to these textual sources has failed to creatively engage the issue, and thus has contributed very little to our understanding about the historical transformations of this uniquely Buddhist concept.[91] To begin to unravel the theoretical complexities involved in the Indian (and Tibetan) Buddhist texts that deal with postmortem transition, it is necessary first to begin to examine the historical movement of ideas—steps that, in my opinion, have been

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taken much too tentatively. That being said, let us return to the matter at hand.

Early on, some schools of Buddhism in India recognized four stages in the life cycle of a sentient being: birth, the period between birth and death, death, and the period between death and the next birth (*antarābhava*). During the intervening period between death and rebirth, as we have previously noted, a being is said to 'exist' as a spirit called *gandharva*, composed of subtle aspects of the five aggregates (*skandhas*). Wayman notes that the theory of such ethereal spirits and of the status of their transitional autonomy inspired considerable controversy among the early Buddhist sects.[92] He lists a number of Buddhist schools that either accepted or rejected the notion. Among those that asserted the existence of the *antarābhava*, were the Sarvāstivādins, Vātsīputrīyas, Sammatīyas, and Pūrvaśailas. The schools that disputed the idea included the Theravādins, Vibhajyavādins, Mahāsānghikas, and Mahīśāsakas.[93] The details surrounding both the acceptance and the rejection of such a theory are intricately woven throughout a complex fabric of rigorous philosophical argument and speculation. As a consequence, we cannot delve too deeply into the debate, or otherwise we risk veering far off course. We can, however, provide a working outline of the basic assumptions, privileging the ideas of those schools that did accept the notion of *antarābhava*.

According to the *Assalāyanasutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya* (a Pali Theravāda source), it is said that the conjunction of three factors is necessary for conception to take place: there must be sexual intercourse between the parents, the mother must be in the proper phase of her menstrual cycle (her 'season'), and a *gandhabba* (Skt., *gandharva*) must be present.[94] In his commentary on this passage, the preeminent fourth century scholar of the Theravāda school, Buddhaghosa interpreted *gandhabba* as the entity that is just about to enter the womb (*tatrūpakasatta*), that is prepared to exist (*paccupaṭṭhito hoti*), and that is propelled by its *kamma* (Skt., *karma*).[95] As a proponent of Theravāda tenets, Buddhaghosa did not accept that his interpretation implied the existence of an intermediate state (*antarābhava*). On this topic, he was simply stating a point consistent with the philosophical position of his school; a point briefly argued in the *Kathā-vatthu* of the *Abhidhamma-piṭaka* (8.2).[96]

In opposition to this Theravādin interpretation, the Sarvāstivāda sect, among others, supported the notion that the transitional period did indeed exist. In his *Abhidharmakośa* (a masterful fourth century exposition of the Sarvāstivāda position), Vasubandhu argued the case in some detail. As he defined it, the intermediate being and its state of existence are to be located between the moment of death and the moment of (re)birth.[97] Quoting a passage similar to the one we noted above, Vasubandhu writes:

> We read in the Sūtra, "Three conditions are necessary for an embryo to descend: the woman must be in good health and fertile, the pair must be united, and a Gandharva must be ready." What is the Gandharva if not an intermediate being?[98]

This *gandharva* is said to be composed of the five aggregates which proceed to the place of rebirth,[99] and to possess the configuration of what is to be the form of the future being after conception.[100] Moreover, he is "seen by the creatures of his class ... by the divine eye. His organs are complete. No one can resist him. He cannot be turned away".[101] Concerning the name '*gandharva*', Vasubandhu explains

> [The intermediate being] eats odors. From whence it gets its name of Gandharva, "he who eats (*arvati*) odors (*gandham*)." The meanings of the roots are multiple: *arv*, if one takes it in the sense of "to go," justifies "he who goes to eat odors" (*arvati gacchati bhoktum*). We have *gandharva*, and not *gandhārva*, as we have *śa'andhu*, or *karkandhu*. A Gandharva of low rank eats unpleasant odors; a Gandharva of high rank eats pleasant odors.[102]

In addition to the answer Vasubandhu offers, it is certainly possible that the *gandharva* became identified in some Buddhist traditions as the being of the intermediate state not only because of its etymological associations, but also more importantly because of its cosmographic connection in the Vedas to the atmospheric mid-space between earth and heaven, its relationship to Soma, and its affiliations with fertility and conception. The *gandharva* is thus the means, or access

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(*sagamana*), through which a being, emerging from its previous life, reaches its new proper existential course (*gati*).[103] Moreover, in considering other possible symbolic associations, we should not ignore the intriguing passage from the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (4.4.4) in which the *gandharva's* body is likened to the 'body' achieved after death: "And as a goldsmith, taking a piece of gold turns it into another, newer and more beautiful shape, even so does this self, after having thrown away this body and dispelled its ignorance, make unto himself another, newer and more beautiful shape like that of the fathers or of the *gandharvas*...". We should be cautious, however, in drawing firm conclusions from statements that appear, or are implied, only once in the text, as is the case with this particular passage. In almost every instance, *gandharvas* (if even mentioned at all) are not identified in the early Upaniṣads as transitional beings.

To help strengthen his argument for the existence of intermediate state beings, Vasubandhu introduces statements by the Buddha concerning the five types of non-returners (*anāgāmin*)—those individuals who, having died in this world, are reborn in a heaven where they will achieve liberation:[104]

> The Blessed One teaches that there are five types of Anāgāmins: one who obtains Nirvāṇa in an intermediate existence (*antarāparinirvāyin*), one who obtains Nirvāṇa as soon as he is reborn (*upapadyaparinirvāyin*), one who obtains Nirvāṇa without effort (*anabhisaṃskāraparinirvāyin*), one who obtains Nirvāṇa by means of effort (*anabhisaṃskāraparinirvāyin*), and one who obtains Nirvāṇa by going higher (*ūrdvasrotas*).[105]

In commenting on the first type of non-returner (that individual who achieves enlightenment in the intermediate state), Vasubandhu offers the following summary of the teachings found in the *Satpuruṣagatis-sūtra*:

> This Sūtra teaches that one should distinguish three types of *antarāparinirvāyins* on the basis of their differences of duration and place: the first is similar to a spark that is extinguished as soon as it arises; the second to a fragment of reddened metal which enlarges in its flight; the third to a fragment of reddened metal which enlarges in its flights, but later, and without falling back into the sun.... Or rather, the first *antarāparinirvāyin* obtains Nirvāṇa as soon as he has taken possession of a certain divine existence; the second after having experienced a heavenly bliss; and the third, after having entered into company or conversation with the gods.... We say that, for the masters who admit these Sūtras, the existence of an intermediate being or the "*skandhas* in the interval" is proved both by Scripture and reasoning.[106]

For our purposes, the crucial point in all of this is that, for those Buddhists who accepted the theory of an intermediate state, a being emerging from its previous existence could either return by way of reconception in the form of a *gandharva* or escape rebirth by never returning, and thus achieve *nirvāṇa*. Nevertheless, in both instances the being would have to pass through an intervening (*antarā*) moment of existence (*bhava*) between either of the two future conditions. We should now consider how the former entity, the *gandharva*, is said to enter the womb and develop as an embryo upon conception.

Having fully substantiated his claim for the existence of the intermediate state, Vasubandhu proceeds to explain how rebirth (*pratisaṃdhi*) takes place:

> An intermediate being is produced with a view to going to the place of its realm of rebirth where it should go. It possesses, by virtue of its actions, the divine eye. Even though distant he sees the place of his rebirth. There he sees his father and mother united. His mind is troubled by the effects of sex and hostility. When the intermediate being is male, it is gripped by a male desire with regard to the mother; when it is female, it is gripped by a female desire with regard to the father; and, inversely, it hates either the father, or the mother, whom it regards as either a male or a female rival. As it is said in the Prajñāpti, "Then either a mind of lust, or a mind of hatred is produced in the Gandharva."
>
> When the mind is thus troubled by these two erroneous thoughts, it attaches itself through the desire for sex to the place where the organs are joined together, imagining that it is he with whom they unite. Then the impurities of semen and blood are found in the womb; the intermediate being, enjoying its pleasures, installs itself there. Then the *skandhas* harden; the intermediate being perishes; and birth arises that is called "reincarnation" (*pratisaṃdhi*).[107]

Even without making obvious comparisons to Freud's Oedipus, this passage is of particular interest to us if we consider it in light of the Vedic notion of the *gandharva*. We should remember that in the Vedas the *gandharva* is famous for his beauty and seductive power.

His passionate love for women often put him in compromising positions, especially when seen by others as an annoying rival of the young bride's new husband. It would appear then that, in the minds of the early Buddhists, the *gandharva's* amorous and sordid nature became the source of an uncontrollable lust that prevented him from achieving loftier goals. Clearly, we see reason to identify the *gandharva* with that being who, obscured by passion, is on the recycling path far from Buddhist enlightenment.

By the sixth century CE, Buddhist descriptions of the intermediate state had solidified, following a standardized model first established by the earlier schools.[108] Further transformations and amendments to this model would not occur until Tantrism began its vast sweep across Northern India in the seventh and eighth century. The Buddhist Siddha cults of this period reinterpreted, elaborated, and embellished the *antarābhava* theory in the context of their specific metaphysical and soteriological projects. These systems were then introduced to Tibet, where theories of transitional states (*bar do*) achieved unprecedented rank among the essential teachings of Buddhism.[109] It is important to realize that, despite its controversial beginnings, the concept of the *antarābhava* continued to flourish and to exert a significant force upon the theories and practices of the later (Northern) Buddhist traditions. We should now summarize the major points discussed above in order to clear a path for our closing argument.

The early Buddhist sects were divided over whether or not an intermediate state between lives should be recognized. Those schools that rejected the notion did, however, accept the name '*gandharva*' (Pali, *gandhabba*) for that which enters the womb upon conception. It was argued that this '*gandharva*' was simply a term for the particular consciousness that linked one existence to another (*paṭisandhi viññāna*) and was not a discarnate spirit of any kind.[110] On the other hand, those schools that accepted the *antarābhava* theory advanced the notion that the *gandharva* was in fact an actual disembodied transitional being wandering in search of its next place of birth. A being in the intervening state had two possible paths before it: (1) as a *gandharva* driven by the *karma* of its previous existence, the being could be reborn in this world, in which case it would have to eventually enter the womb of its future mother, but only if conditions were right (i.e., if the parents were engaged in sexual intercourse, the mother was in her 'season', and the *gandharva* was present); or, (2) if particularly advanced along the Buddhist path, the being could opt out of existence, so to speak, and, in the period of transition, achieve final liberation (*parinirvāṇa*) from the ongoing cycles of birth and death (*saṃsāra*). Here we simply encounter a version of the basic Buddhist teaching of moral retribution—those who follow the righteous path set forth by the Buddha achieve the highest goal, while those who blindly follow the whims of passion and desire are swept up by the fierce winds of *karma* and driven back down into another existence, only to begin the cycle all over again.

Synthesis and Conclusion

I would like now to adopt a comparative approach and examine the three models presented above in terms of their relationship to one another. It is my contention that these apparently distinct models actually form part of a conceptual continuum, but are not necessarily linked by direct causal development. Let me illustrate my point. The Vedic model can be represented by two poles that, when arranged spatially, are aligned along a vertical axis. The upper pole corresponds to the heavenly realm of the fathers (*devaloka/pitṛloka*)—recall that in this period the two realms are not clearly distinguished; the lower pole corresponds to the earthly realm. Placed in the interval between the two is the sacrifice, the fulcrum of the entire Vedic system and the link that connects earth to the heavenly world above (fig. 1). More specifically, in terms of the system's mechanics, an individual, via the sacrificial act, passes from the microcosmic plane (*adhyātman*) to the macrocosmic realm of divinity (*adhidevatā*), here identified as either *devaloka* or *pitṛloka*. At death, this transition from microcosm to macrocosm is a material one and is understood quite literally as a final sacrifice to be performed by every human being.

As a result of various ideological shifts that had taken place in India around the sixth century BCE, the Vedic model was redefined

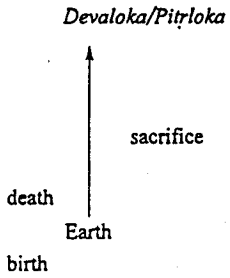

Figure 1. The Vedic model.

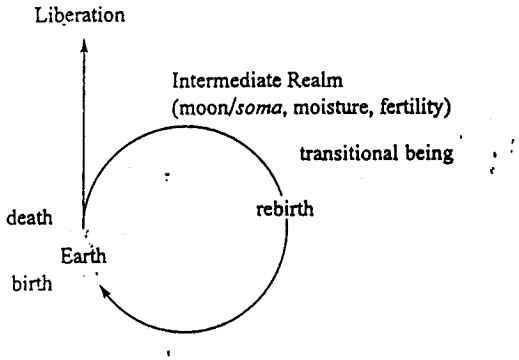

Figure 2. The general post-Vedic model.

and hence spatially rearranged (fig. 2). In the Upaniṣadic model, we still have a basic vertical polarity, only now the *pitṛloka* has been separated from the *devaloka* and situated in the space between heaven and earth (fig. 3). This shifting of the father's realm to an intermediary level occurred in part because of the ancestor's intimate relationship to the Vedic sacrifice (it should not go unnoticed that in the Vedic model this ritual activity occupies the intervening space between earth and heaven). In the Upaniṣads, the ritual system of the Brāhmaṇas had lost its preeminent position, displaced by a new paradigm in which knowledge assumed supremacy. With this new paradigm came the notion that each person lives a series of lives (*saṃsāra*); that the moral quality of the person's previous actions

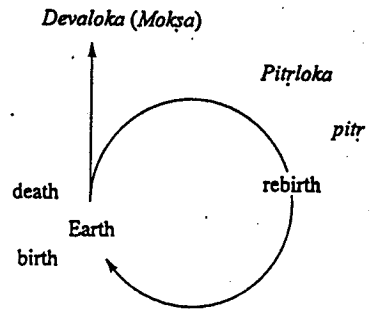

Figure 3. The Upaniṣadic model.

(*karma*) determines the quality of existence in the next life; and, that the person who possesses the correct knowledge of the nonduality of self and Absolute (*Brahman*) can forever escape (*mokṣa*) the ongoing cycles of birth and death. In the Upaniṣadic model, final deliverance is identified as *devaloka* (or *Brahmaloka*) and corresponds to the upper pole on the vertical axis. At death, the soul's journey follows one of two distinct paths: one leading to the 'gods' (and liberation), another to the fathers (and rebirth). The latter path is followed by those who have 'conquered the world' through a lifetime of sacrificial offerings and public service. In other words, the realm of the fathers is reached via ritual activity and good works, and without supreme gnosis. For the Upaniṣads, knowledge is what liberates the soul and 'sends' it to the world above. The heavenly realm is associated with the sun and its radiant light (knowledge and immortality), the paternal realm with the moon and darkness (ignorance and death).

The moon itself being periodically 'dead' becomes the prototype of the deceased's passage and return to life. The life cycle of the soul, subject to alternate periods of birth and death, is regarded in the Upaniṣads as being governed by the cycle of the moon; and because this cycle demonstrates that there is life in death, the dead are said to go to the moon to be regenerated and transformed, all in preparation for a return to a new life on earth. It was believed that the journey back followed the descent of the divine life-bearing essence, or Soma, the vitalizing moisture that manifests itself in the cyclical

processes of fertility. This Soma was associated in Vedic mythology with its protector, the semi-divine *gandharva*. Occupying the mid-space between heaven and earth, the atmospheric realm (*antarīkṣa*) of clouds, moisture and rain, the *gandharva* took over the attributes of the divine Soma and became affiliated with the powers of fecundity and reproduction. The Buddhists, appropriating the concept of this intermediary being, maintained that the *gandharva* was that entity who, upon emerging from its previous existence, eventually enters the womb and becomes an embryo at the moment of conception.

The Buddhist model can also be represented as a vertical polarity with an intermediate zone. Although structurally consistent with the Upaniṣadic model, it replaces that system's concept of *mokṣa* (*devaloka*) with its own *nirvāṇa* and the *pitṛloka* with its *antarābhava* (fig. 4). Emerging from within the same conceptual environment that gave rise to the soteriological project of the Upaniṣads, Buddhism also presented its own version of the doctrines of *saṃsāra*, *karma* and liberation from the cycles of birth and death. Similarly, the Buddhists argued that, at death, a being could travel one of two paths. If, in his/her previous life, the individual had performed good works, diligently practiced the Buddha's teachings, and had gained as a result the proper wisdom, s/he would travel the straight path upward and, from within the intervening state, achieve the final goal, emancipation (*nirvāṇa*) from the ongoing cycles of existence. If, on the other hand,

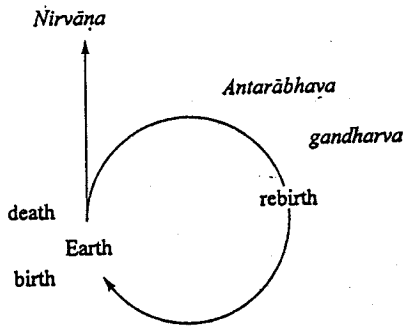

Figure 4. The Buddhist model.

the individual had failed in the prior life to perform many virtuous deeds and had not gained the wisdom of the Buddha's teachings, s/he would be caught in the recycling process and as a *gandharva*—the intermediate state being—descend into a womb to be born again.

In the final analysis we see that, structurally speaking, the Buddhist and Upaniṣadic models, proceeding from the vertical polarity of the earlier Vedic model, correspond to one another and together exhibit a more generalized pattern like that diagrammed in figure 2. In terms of the conceptual history of the idea of a postmortem transitional period, we can argue that the Buddhist *antarābhava* is conceptually linked to the Upaniṣadic *pitṛloka* and that notions surrounding the latter may have, in some sense, provided the cosmographic and symbolic components for the development of the intermediate state concept in Buddhism. The argument is made clearer if we consider the correspondences between the two systems. In the Upaniṣads, the paternal realm is spatially positioned between earth and 'heaven', the state of final liberation (*mokṣa*) as well as between death and rebirth. The fathers and the path to their abode are associated with ritual activity, the moon, Soma, life-bearing moisture, and rebirth. Like the *pitṛloka*, the Buddhist *antarābhava* is also placed between earth and the liberated state (*nirvāṇa*) as well as between death and rebirth. The inhabitants of this intermediate realm are called *gandharvas*—semi-divine liminal beings closely associated with Soma, life-bearing moisture and fertility. As disembodied transitional beings, *gandharvas* travel the intervening space and, upon conception, enter a womb; the first moment of a new existence.[11]

The conclusion that I would like to draw out from the argument above is that the Buddhists, in formulating their notion of the intermediate state, may have borrowed elements from Vedic and Upaniṣadic theories of postmortem transition. Sharing similar ideological assumptions, the symbol systems operating in both Buddhism and the early Upaniṣads allowed for a certain amount of cross-fertilization. From the Buddhist side, it appears that the *antarābhava* theory is either partially or entirely the result of the fusion of Upaniṣadic cosmography (*pitṛloka*) and Vedic mythology (*gandharva*), transposed

on a grid that is structurally, but not conceptually, identical to that of its Upaniṣadic rival.

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[1] John Martin Fischer, *The Metaphysics of Death* (California: Stanford University Press, 1993), 4.

[2] Ibid., 4.

[3] Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice* (California: Stanford University Press, 1990), 228.

[4] See Victor Turner, *The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1967) and *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1969).

[5] For examples, see Maurice Bloch and Jonathan Parry, *Death & the Regeneration of Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982); Richard Huntington and Peter Metcalf, *Celebrations of Death* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979 & 1991); James L. Watson and Evelyn S. Rawski, *Death Ritual in Late Imperial and Modern China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988); Robert Hertz, *Death & the Right Hand* (New York: Free Press, 1960); Stan Royal Mumford, *Himalayan Dialogue* (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989); and, Glenn H. Mullin, *Death and Dying: The Tibetan Tradition* (Boston: Arkana Paperbacks, 1986).

[6] See, for instance, *Mahāvyutpatti* 1015, 7680; *Lankāvatāra-sūtra* 160.5, 177.4, 370.14; *Dharmasaṃgraha* 103; *Mahāvastu* 1.33.6; Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa* 3.10-15; Asanga's *Bodhisattvabhūmi* 390.19 and *Yogācārābhūmi* 1.20.4-13. Of the early schools of Indian Buddhism, the Theravādins contested the notion of a post-mortem intermediate period (*antarābhava*). I will consider in more detail the issue of Buddhist postmortem states in the latter part of this paper.

[7] These are: form (*rūpa*), sensation (*vedanā*), perception (*saṃjñā*), mental formations (*saṃskāra*), and consciousness (*vijñāna*).

[8] For details see Alex Wayman, "The Intermediate-State Dispute in Buddhism". In *Buddhist Studies in Honour of I.B. Horner*, L. Cousins, ed. (Holland: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1974), 227-239.

[9] At this point, I have been unable to locate the use of the term *antarābhava* in any Vedic or Post-Vedic textual source. The term, however, does appear in Amarasiṃha's *Amarakośa* (3.4.135), dating sometime between the sixth and eight

centuries CE. This find is not tremendously significant since Amarasiṃha was supposedly a Buddhist, but it is interesting to note that he identifies the *antarābhava* entity as a *gandharva* (*antarābhavasattve gandharvo divyagāyane//bar do bar srid sems can dang rta dang lha yi glu gandharva*). See *Amarakośa and Its Tibetan Translation ('Chi Med mDzod)*, M.M. Satis Chandra Vidyābhūṣaṇa, ed. Gangtok, 1984, 833.

[10] This information has been gathered from David M. Knipe, *Hinduism* and Stephanie Jamison, *The Ravenous Hyenas and the Wounded Sun* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 11.

[11] Brian K. Smith, *Reflections on Resemblance, Ritual, and Religion* (New York, 1989), 46.

[12] Bruce Lincoln, *Myth, Cosmos, and Society: Indo-European Themes of Creation and Destruction* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1986), 139.

[13] Brian K. Smith, *Reflections on Resemblance, Ritual, and Religion*, 50.

[14] RV 10.90.16; unless otherwise noted, all translations from the *Ṛg Veda* are O'Flaherty's (New York: Penguin Books, 1981).

[15] Bruce Lincoln, *Myth, Cosmos, and Society*, 127.

[16] Ibid., 127.

[17] RV 10.16.2. For an intriguing analysis of cremation/sacrifice as primarily an act of cooking that both feeds the god Agni and preserves that part of the deceased which is to be conveyed to the world beyond see Charles Malamoud, "Cuire le monde". In *Cuire le monde: rite et pensée dans l'inde ancienne* (Paris: Editions de la Découverte, 1989).

[18] Arthur Berriedale Keith, *The Religion and Philosophy of the Vedas and Upaniṣads* (Cambridge, Mass., 1925; reprint Delhi, 1970), 403.

[19] See also RV 10.58.

[20] RV 10.16.5.

[21] RV 10.14.8 (emphasis added).

[22] Perhaps to a lesser degree, this 'subtle' body is also composed of light. A rather peculiar reference to light and the intermediate body is found in *Ṛg Veda* 10.56.1: "This is your one light, and there beyond is your other; merge with the third light. By merging with a body, grow lovely, dear to the gods in the highest birthplace". O'Flaherty interprets the light 'beyond' as a reference to the sun, the 'one light' to the funeral pyre, and the 'third light' to the realm of the dead (O'Flaherty, *Rig Veda*, 94). I must admit, the result of O'Flaherty's educated effort to make sense of this intriguing passage is quite plausible, even though she offers no documented evidence for her position. However, I would prefer that the 'third light' represent the sun or a similar source of intense radiance, rather than the 'light beyond', which could just as easily be thought of as the realm of the dead. The reason for this switch is dependent upon my reading of several passages from the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, where the sun

is understood as death. It is here also that reference is made to a 'glowing light', a 'lotus-leaf', and an 'immortal element', all of which are homologous and related intimately with death. The key is contained in the following verse: "... after laying down the *lotus-leaf*, it is on that *immortal element* that he builds for himself a body ... and he becomes immortal" (ŚB 10.4.5.2; Julius Eggeling's translation). Concerning this 'immortal element', we find: "And that man in yonder (sun's) orb is no other than Death; and that *glowing light* is that *immortal element*..." (ŚB 10.5.2.3). And, "that *glowing light* is the same as this *lotus-leaf*..." (ŚB 10.5.2.6).

Now, amid the confusion, I would like to construct a coherent picture of what all this might mean. The 'one light' is indeed the fire of cremation. The 'light beyond' is the realm of death—"yonder (sun's) orb is no other than Death". At some level, O'Flaherty may be correct in identifying this light with the sun, but clearly the essential point is that the 'yonder orb' is linked to death itself. The 'third light', or rather 'the glowing light', is the 'immortal element' out of which arises the subtle body; hence, to "merge with the third light" is just another way of saying "merging with a body". And, having "putteth on the radiant" (ŚB 10.5.2.4), the deceased joins "the gods in the highest birthplace".

[23] See for example RV 10.58 and AV 6.18.

[24] Arthur B. Keith, *The Religion and Philosophy of the Vedas and Upaniṣads*, 403.

[25] RV 10.16.3.

[26] The *ātman*, together with the breaths (*prāṇas*), becomes in the Upaniṣads a topic of considerable importance, and one that succeeds in generating potentially endless speculation.

[27] Unless otherwise noted, all translations from *Atharva Veda* (AV) are William Dwight Whitney's (Cambridge, Mass., 1905; reprint Delhi, 1962).

[28] For a detailed discussion of this relationship consult Bruce Lincoln, *Myth, Cosmos, and Society*, specifically pp. 119-140.

[29] David M. Knipe, "*Sapiṇḍīkaraṇa*: The Hindu Rite of Entry into Heaven", in *Religious Encounters with Death*, ed. Frank Reynolds and Earle Waugh (Pennsylvania State University, 1977), 114.

[30] See for example, *Śānkhāyana Gṛhyasūtra* (3.5, 6; 4.2.7), *Pāraskara Gṛhyasūtra* (3.10.49), *Baudhāyana Gṛhyasūtra* (3.12.14), and *Bhāradvāja Gṛhyasūtra* (3.17). In this later literature, a clear distinction is made between the recently deceased, called *preta*, and the distantly deceased, the fathers (*pitaras*). Elaborate funerary rituals (*śrāddha*) are prescribed for the purposes of enabling the *preta* to join the company of its ancestors. It is believed that failure to perform the rites may result in the *preta* becoming angry. In thinking of *pretas* as vengeful spirits, we may be reminded of the so-called 'hungry ghost' (also referred to as *preta*) in Buddhist literature. The relationship between Hindu and Buddhist conceptions of *preta* is a fascinating and complex issue that has received little scholarly attention—the details remain to be

sorted and examined. I have not included a discussion on this topic because the Buddhist notion of *preta* rests firmly within a specific cosmological framework (e.g., the six realms of existence) distinct from notions of *antarābhava*. Unlike the Hindu *preta* of the ritual sūtras, its Buddhist counterpart is rarely, if ever, identified as a postmortem transitional entity; hence, the issue is not particularly relevant at this stage in our examination of intermediate-state theories.

Nonetheless, for comparative analyses of Hindu and Buddhist notions of *preta* within the broader context of merit transfer, see John C. Holt, "Assisting the Dead By Venerating the Living: Merit Transfer in the Early Buddhist Tradition," *Numen* 28, no. 1 (1981): 1-28; and David G. White, "*Dakkhiṇa* and *Agnicayana*: An Extended Application of Paul Mus's Typology," *History of Religions* (1986): 188-213.

[31] RV 1.72.7; 10.14.1; 10.14.2; 10.14.7; 10.14.10; 10.164.30-31; 10.88.15.

[32] RV 10.56.1; 10.56.5; 10.56.7.

[33] RV 10.164.30; 10.58.

[34] O'Flaherty, *The Rig Veda*, 48.

[35] J.C. Heesterman, *The Inner Conflict of Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 32-33. Heesterman discusses this myth in the context of a much broader argument; namely, that, with the elimination of Death as a participant in the ritual, the rival was likewise eliminated and thus "the single yajamāna was enabled to deal ritually with death without incurring the risk involved in the ambivalent cooperation with the others" (32). This moment marked the beginning of Heesterman's so-called "classical period" in Vedic India.

[36] The daily morning and evening fire sacrifice.

[37] ŚB 2.3.3.15.

[38] ŚB 4.2.5.10 (emphasis added).

[39] Brian K. Smith, *Reflections on Resemblance, Ritual, and Religion*, 106. For a discussion of the correlation between sunlight and the fires of the *agnihotra* ritual, consult H.W. Bodewitz, *The Daily Evening and Morning Offering (Agnihotra) according to the Brāhmaṇas* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1976).

[40] For actual details concerning these rites, consult David Knipe, "*Sapiṇḍikaraṇa*: The Hindu Rite of Entry into Heaven"; Pandurang Vaman Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra: Ancient and Medieval Religious and Civil Law* (Poona, 1968-1975), vol. IV, 220-240 & 520-525; Veena Das, "The Uses of Liminality: Society and Cosmos in Hinduism", *Contributions to Indian Sociology* 10, no. 2 (1976): 245-263; and Meena Kaushik, "The Symbolic Representation of Death", *Contributions to Indian Sociology* 10, no. 2 (1976): 265-292.

[41] Translation by S. Radhakrishnan, *The Principal Upaniṣads* (London, 1953; reprint Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1992), 432.

[42] RV 10.14.2.

[43] RV 10.14.7, 10; also AV 8.2.11.

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[44] *Garuḍa Purāṇa* (*pretakāṇḍa*) 2.15.72, 76, 78-82, 84-85. Translation in *Ancient Indian Tradition & Mythology* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1979), vol. 13, 812-813. See also Emil Abegg, *Der Pretakalpa des Garuḍa Purāṇa (Naunidhirāma's Sāroddhāra): Eine Darstellung des hinduistischen Totenkultes und Jenseitsglaubens* (Berlin and Leipzig: Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1921), 44-58.

[45] Issues related to death, impurity, and danger are, by now, quite overworked clichés. Nonetheless, the classic studies on the topic are still Hertz's "A Contribution to the Study of the Collective Representation of Death" in *Death and the Right Hand*, trans. R. & C. Needham (New York: Free Press, 1960), 27-86; Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (1966; reprint, New York: Ark Paperbacks, 1989); and, more recently, Maurice Bloch and Jonathan Parry, ed. *Death and the Regeneration of Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

[46] Brian K. Smith, *Reflections on Resemblance, Ritual, and Religion*, 108.

[47] See for example ŚB 11.2.7.33.

[48] Arthur B. Keith, *The Religion and Philosophy of the Vedas and Upaniṣads*, 410.

[49] Lincoln has shown that the image of a bifurcated path on which the dead travel has its roots in a common mythic motif found throughout various Indo-European 'funerary geographies', ranging from the earliest hymns of the *Rg Veda* to nineteenth century Russian folklore. See his *Death, War, and Sacrifice: Studies in Ideology and Practice* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 119-127.

[50] RV 10.18.1.

[51] See *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (BĀU) 6.2.15-16; *Chandogya Upaniṣad* (ChU) 4.15.5, 5.10.1-2.

[52] Brian K. Smith, *Reflections on Resemblance, Ritual, and Religion*, 115n.185.

[53] BĀU 6.2.16.

[54] See for example BĀU 1.5.16.

[55] Patrick Olivelle. *Saṃnyāsa Upaniṣads: Hindu Scriptures on Asceticism and Renunciation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 19-57.

[56] Ibid., 33.

[57] See for example BĀU 4.4.22; ChU 1.12 and 5.24.4; and *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* (TaitU) 2.3.

[58] BĀU 4.4.5.

[59] ChU 5.10.1-6 (brackets added), translation by Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty in *Textual Sources for the Study of Hinduism* (Totowa, New Jersey: Barnes & Noble Books, 1988), 36-37. For alternative passages, compare BĀU 6.2.15-16; ChU 4.15.5-6; and *Kauṣītaki-Brāhmaṇa Upaniṣad* (KBU) 1.2.

[60] RV 1.72.7; 2.2.4; 10.16.2.

[61] RV 1.109.7; 1.125.6; 10.56.1; 10.58.6; 10.107.2; 10.154.5; 27.21; AV 3.29.3; 4.34.2-6; 6.120.3; 11.4; ŚB 11.5.6.4; 14.7.1.32-33.

[62] Brian K. Smith, *Reflections on Resemblance, Ritual, and Religion*, 115n.185.

[63] Jan Gonda, "Soma, Amṛta and the Moon" in *Change and Continuity in Indian Religion* (London: Mouton & Co., 1965), 40.

[64] Mircea Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion* (New York: New American Library, 1958), 171.

[65] For information concerning lunar symbolism and the prognostic and diagnostic significance of the moon's periodic cycle in Indian medicine, consult Francis Zimmermann's "*Ṛtu-Sātmya*: The Seasonal Cycle and the Principle of Appropriateness", *Social Science & Medicine* 14B (1980): 99-106.

[66] Gonda, "Soma, Amṛta and the Moon", 44. Gonda's statement comes as a response to a passage he had earlier quoted from the *Jaiminīya Upaniṣad* (JU) 3.27.17.

[67] Ibid., 42.

[68] Ibid., 38.

[69] See ŚB 1.6.4.5; 7.3.1.46; 11.2.5.3.

[70] ŚB 6.2.2.6. Reference from David White, *The Alchemical Body* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, forthcoming), 21n.35.

[71] Gonda, "Soma, Amṛta and the Moon", 46.

[72] Ibid., 48.

[73] RV 1.22.14; 8.66.5; 10.39.5.

[74] RV 9.83.4; translation by Ralph T.H. Griffith in *Hinduism: The Rig Veda* (1889; reprint, New York: Quality Paperback Book Club, 1992).

[75] RV 9.85.12; translation by Griffith.

[76] RV 9.113.3.

[77] RV 10.85.21-22; ŚB 3.2.4.3; *Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā* (MS) 3.7.3; *Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa* (PB) 19.3.2.

[78] *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* (AB) 1.1.27; ŚB 3.2.4; *Taittirīya Saṃhitā* (TaitS) 6.1.6.5; MS 3.7.3.

[79] AV 4.4.1.

[80] A.A. MacDonell, *The Vedic Mythology* (Varanasi: Indological Book House, n.d), 137.

[81] Hermann Oldenberg, *The Religion of the Veda*, trans. Shridhar B. Shrotri (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1988), 125.

[82] Referenced and quoted in R.S. Panchamukhi, *Gandharvas & Kinnaras in Indian Iconography* (Dharwar: Kannada Research Institute, 1951), 3.

[83] AV 2.2.5; PB 12.11.10.

[84] RV 10.85.40-41.

[85] RV 10.85.21-22; translation by O'Flaherty.

[86] AV 4.34.2-3.

[87] AV 12.1.23.

[88] RV 10.123.7.

[89] PB 19.3.2.

[90] Principal exegetical sources for the Hīnayāna may be found in Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa* (*Kośa*) 3.10-16; 3.40; 4.53; 6.34, 39; and like sources for the Mahāyāna are Asanga's *Abhidharmasamuccaya* and the *Bhūmivastu* section of his *Yogacaryābhūmi* 1.20.4-13.

[91] I know of only one article in English devoted entirely to this issue, and that is Alex Wayman's "The Intermediate-State Dispute in Buddhism" in *Buddhist Studies in Honour of I.B. Horner*, ed. L. Cousins (Holland: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1974), 227-239. The topic is discussed by Shôku Bando in his "Antarābhava", *Indogaku Bukkyôgaku Kenkyū* (*Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies*) 27, no. 2 (1979): 182-183, but unfortunately this work has not been translated. Dieter Michael Back's philological analysis of the so-called *Tibetan Book of the Dead* is perhaps the first study that genuinely attempts to move beyond the psychological, devotional, and/or sectarian biases of the vast majority of scholars working in this particular area. See his *Eine buddhistische Jenseitsreise: Das sogenannte "Totenbuch der Tibeter" aus philologischer Sicht* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1979).

[92] Alex Wayman, "The Intermediate-State Dispute in Buddhism", 227.

[93] Wayman, 227. These schools developed approximately a century after the Buddha's death as a result of certain schisms that had taken place in the Buddhist Order. The initial split occurred during the famed Second Council (c. 383 BCE), which was held over the issue of whether or not certain practices adopted by the monks of Vaiśālī were in violation of the monastic precepts (*vinaya*). The verdict resulted in the formation of two schools: the Mahāsanghika and the Sthaviravāda. Many more schools eventually split away from these original two. The Sarvāstivāda, the Vātsiputrīya, the Sammatīya, the Theravāda, and the Vibhajyavāda were all descendants of the Sthaviravāda lineage. It is not known from where the Pūrvaśaila sect arose. For an elaborate account of the historical development of the early Buddhist sects, consult Hirakawa Akira, *A History of Indian Buddhism*, trans. Paul Groner (University of Hawaii Press, 1990), 77-126.

[94] *Majjhima-Nikāya* 2.157, also see 1.265-266.

[95] *Papañcasūdanī Majjhimanakāyaṭṭhakathā* 2.310; reference taken from James P. McDermott, "Karma and Rebirth in Early Buddhism" in *Karma and Rebirth in Classical Indian Traditions*, ed. Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 170.

[96] For a translation, see Shwe Zan Aung and Rhys Davids, *Points of Controversy or Subjects of Discourse* (London: Luzac & Company, Ltd.; Pali Text Society, 1969), 212-213. The argument centers around divergent interpretations of the Sūtra phrase "completed existence within the interval". The disputed point revolves around the notion that there exists an intermediate period of a week or longer during which a being awaits a new conception. The counter-argument bases itself on the Buddha's statement that there are no more than three states of existence—desire (*kāma*), form (*rūpa*), and the formless (*arūpa*). Since the intervening state is not included in any of these three, the conclusion must be that such a state does not exist.

[97] *Kośa* 3.10.

[98] *Kośa* 3.12; unless otherwise noted all translations from Vasubandhu's text are by Leo M. Pruden from Louis de La Vallée Poussin's French translation of the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam* (Berkeley, California: Asian Humanities Press, 1988).

[99] *Kośa* 3.10.

[100] *Kośa* 3.13.

[101] *Kośa* 3.14.

[102] *Kośa* 3.14.

[103] *Kośa* 3.4.

[104] *Saṃyuktāgama-sūtra* 37.20; *Dīgha-nikāya* 3.237.

[105] *Kośa* 3.12.

[106] *Kośa* 3.12.

[107] *Kośa* 3.15.

[108] Compare Vasubandhu's account, for example, to that found in the *Saddharma-smṛty-upasthāna-sūtra* 34.

[109] In Tibet, such notions became an essential component in a highly developed and extensive soteriological system involving the radical manipulation of psycho-physical energies to bring about transformative nonordinary states of consciousness (in many instances, said to be identical with the experiences of dying). See for example Lati Rinpoche and Jeffrey Hopkins, *Death, Intermediate State and Rebirth* (New York: Snow Lion Publications, 1979); Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, *Clear Light of Bliss: Mahamudra in Vajrayana Buddhism* (London: Wisdom Publications, 1982); and Giacomella Orofino, *Sacred Tibetan Teachings on Death and Liberation* (Great Britain: Prism Press, 1990).

[110] McDermott, "Karma and Rebirth in Early Buddhism", 170.

[111] The corresponding links can be strung together in the following manner:
pitṛloka = intermediary realm
the moon = death
pitaras = the moon = Soma
Soma = moisture = fertility = *gandharva*
gandharva = *antarīkṣa* = disembodied spirit = *antarābhava*
antarābhava = intermediary realm

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Review article

NATIVE EGYPTIAN RELIGION IN ITS ROMAN GUISE

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FRANÇOISE PERPILLOU-THOMAS, *Fêtes d'Égypte ptolémaïque et romaine d'après la documentation papyrologique grecque.* Studia Hellenistica 31. Louvain: Studia Hellenistica, 1993. Pp. xxxi + 293. BEF 1600.

Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt, Teil II: Principat, Band 18: Religion, 5. Teilband: Heidentum: die religiösen Verhältnisse in den Provinzen. Ed. Wolfgang Haase. Berlin: De Gruyter, 1995. Pp. xiv + 929. DM 726,00. ISBN 3-11-014238-4.

At least since the release of the Nag Hammadi library Roman Egypt has seemed like the land of Christianities *par excellence*, a veritable cauldron of sects and study-groups surpassing (or perhaps exemplifying) other areas of the late antique Mediterranean world. New work on nascent monasticism, desert ascetics, and all their various literatures has also come to reveal a vastly more complex Christianity than was once portrayed in histories of this region. But one would hardly know from all this data and attention that Christianity was of only idiosyncratic and sporadic appeal into the fourth century. Church historians are hard-pressed to admit that Egyptians—ordinary Egyptians—already had "a" religion that was entirely life- and community-sustaining before the late-fourth-century onslaughts of monks razed temples and interrupted millennia-old traditions in the villages.

The two books under review provide perhaps the most complete documentation yet of native Egyptian religion in its Roman guise, the *Aufstieg* volume (according to its customary format) drawing topically on different kinds of data, Perpillou-Thomas focusing exclusively on the religious implications of festivals.

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LANGUAGE AGAINST ITS OWN MYSTIFICATIONS: DECONSTRUCTION IN NĀGĀRJUNA AND DŌGEN

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> ... we find ourselves in the midst of a rude fetishism when we call to mind the basic presuppositions of the metaphysics of language—which is to say, of *reason*. It is *this* which sees everywhere deed and doer; this which believes in will as cause in general; this which believes in the 'ego', in the ego as being, in the ego and substance, and which *projects* its belief in the ego-substance on to all things—only thus does it *create* the concept 'thing'.... 'Reason' in language: oh what a deceitful old woman! I fear we are not getting rid of God because we still believe in grammar....
>
> Nietzsche[1]

Why Nāgārjuna and Dōgen 道元? Such a comparison is inviting because both are obvious and difficult. On the one hand, they are arguably the two greatest Mahāyāna thinkers, linked by their commitment to its understanding of the world and (if we accept the traditional account) by a transmission lineage that extends from Śākyamuni through Nāgārjuna to Dōgen and his successors. On the other hand, however, are vast cultural differences, due not only to the geography and the millennium that separate them but just as much to the disparity between their very different languages, Sanskrit and Japanese.

These linguistic differences are further reflected in their extraordinarily different—I am tempted to say *opposite*—textual styles. Sanskrit has sometimes been considered the archetypal philosophical language, for its easily formed substantives have encouraged a preponderance of abstract universals. Certainly Nāgārjuna is a philosopher's philosopher, notorious for a laconic, knife-edged logic that wields distinctions that no one had noticed before and that many since have been unable to see the point of. In contrast, Chinese and Japanese both have a much more concrete flavor, with a preponderance of simile and metaphor. Dōgen's major work, the *Shōbōgenzō* 正法眼藏, written in his own very idiosyncratic Japanese, is as poetical and allusive as Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* is dialectical and dry. Dōgen's text is mostly metaphor and Nāgārjuna's has almost none. While Nāgārjuna seems preoccupied with splitting what some see as conceptual hairs, Dōgen is concerned with exploring the semantic possibilities of Buddhist texts to discover new meanings, willing and even eager to "misinterpret" certain passages to make his point.

What, then, can be gained from comparing them? My argument is, first, that Nāgārjuna and Dōgen nonetheless point to many of the same Buddhist insights because they deconstruct the same type of dualities, most of which may be understood as versions of our commonsense but delusive distinction between substance and attribute, subject and predicate. This will be demonstrated by analyzing the enigmatic chapter 2 (on motion and rest) of the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* and by examin-

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ing Dogen's transgression of traditional Buddhist teachings in his *Shōbōgenzō*. The second part of this essay, however, is concerned with determining the limits of this similarity: for, although both texts work to undermine our dualistic ways of understanding ourselves "in" the world, they reach quite different conclusions about the possibility of language expressing a "true" understanding of the world—a disagreement that may reflect the different possibilities of their different languages.

What Does Nāgārjuna Deconstruct?

> [W]e do not only *designate* things with them [words and concepts], we think originally that through them we grasp the *true* in things. Through words and concepts we are still continually misled into imagining things as being simpler than they are, separate from one another, indivisible, each existing in and for itself. A philosophical mythology lies concealed in *language* which breaks out again every moment, however careful one may be otherwise. (Nietzsche)[2]

Few if any Buddhist scholars would dispute that Nāgārjuna (second century C.E.?) is the most important Buddhist philosopher, and none of them would deny that the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* is his most important work. It is something of a scandal, then, that the basic meaning of this difficult text remains so obscure. This is not for want of interpreters—no Buddhist thinker has received more attention—yet there is little agreement among his Western expositors. It is curious, and more than a little suspicious, that Nāgārjuna usually ends up expounding something quite similar to one's own favorite philosopher or philosophy: Shayer's Hegel, Stcherbatsky's Kant, Murti's Vedānta, Gudmundsen's Wittgenstein, Magliola's Derrida, Kalupahana's empiricism and pragmatism, and so forth. Does this mean that the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* is too foreign to our usual ways of understanding the world to be understood on its own terms?

The basic problem is not the nature of Nāgārjuna's arguments themselves but their target; for, despite (or because of) the various opinions of traditional and contemporary commentators on this matter, it remains unclear from Nāgārjuna's texts precisely what or whom he is criticizing. Since we have no other reliable access to Nāgārjuna's intentions, this is an issue that may never be settled. From a postmodern perspective, the opportunity this ambiguity provides is not entirely negative, but then the onus falls upon each interpreter not only to offer a plausible account of Nāgārjuna's motives but also to justify the continued importance of those motives for us.

Recently, for example, David Kalupahana made a strong case that the opponent in chapter 2 is the atomic theory shared by the substantialist Sarvāstivādins and the momentarist Sautrāntikas.[3] This may well be true, yet that by itself does not go far enough to explain the significance of Nāgārjuna's arguments today: for why should we be concerned about metaphysical debates between obscure Buddhist schools that thrived two thousand years ago?

The significance of those philosophical views increases for us, though, *if they are attempts to resolve an inconsistency that plagues our ordinary "commonsense" way of understanding the world.* If this is true, however, it may not be necessary or even worth our while to devote time and energy expounding those particular metaphysical systems; it may be more useful for us to turn immediately to that commonsense understanding and address its supposed *aporia* more directly. Accordingly, the target of this essay is not any developed philosophical position (such as the atomic theory of Abhidharma Buddhism) but the more basic difficulties that plague our usual commonsense distinction between (what philosophers call) *substance* and *attribute*—which, Nietzsche would argue, may be traced back to our linguistic distinction between subject and predicate. In chapter 2, Nāgārjuna attacks this distinction in terms of the duality we ordinarily make between a *goer* and his or her *going*.

By any standards, "the analysis of going and coming" is a peculiar and difficult text. Following the first chapter, which demonstrates our inability to understand the relationship between things and their causal relations, chapter 2 is evidently meant to exemplify the general argument presented earlier, by offering a more concrete instance of Nāgārjuna's deconstructive approach to the relationship between things (in this case, movers) and their predicates/attributes (moving). In the process, however, Nāgārjuna seems to engage in a kind of logic-chopping that is difficult to follow and whose import is unclear: exactly what is it that is being deconstructed? This chapter seems to exemplify Frederick Streng's objection to Nāgārjuna's method, that it is "an analysis which appears to be rather arid and often simply a play on words."[4] L. Stafford Betty points particularly to the reification of *gamana* ("act of going"): since the term is "empirically meaningless" and we do not need to grant that there is any such "thing" in the empirical world as a bare "act of going" without a goer, the argument fails.[5] Yet isn't this looking in the wrong place? The *Kārikās* do not offer an analysis of the world itself but analyze our ways of understanding the world. It is these ways of thinking (which, according to Nāgārjuna, are inconsistent) that make the world "empirical" for us. If so, we should look for a *gamana* in our categories of thought, and there we find it in our ingrained tendency (perhaps due to, and certainly enshrined in, the subject-predicate nature of language) to distinguish our experience into self-existing entities and their activities. We do think of ourselves, for example, as persons distinguishable from our actions, and this implies some sort of reification not only of ourselves but also of the act, as our substantives 'act', 'action', and 'activity' reveal.

The test of this approach is the light it can shed on the chapter, the whole of which may be summarized as follows.

Verses 1–7. Where does motion occur? Obviously not over the already-gone-over, and not over the not-yet-gone-over, but it cannot be on the being-gone-over, because that would imply *two* movers: that there is a being-gone-over distinct from the goer that goes over it.

Verses 8–11. Who is going? We can't say "the goer is going" because that would imply two goers: that the goer is a goer even without going.

Verses 12–14. Where does going *begin?* Not on the already-gone-over, and not on the being-gone-over (in which case the going must already have begun). But it could not begin on the yet-to-be-gone-over (for beginning there would make it being-gone-over).

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Verses 15–17. Similar arguments are made about *coming-to-rest* (becoming stationary): who comes to rest? Neither a goer (that would be a contradiction) nor a non-goer (who cannot *become* stationary). And *where* does coming-to-rest occur? Not on the already-gone-over, and not on the not-yet-gone-over, and it cannot happen on the being-gone-over (which would be a contradiction). So our usual understandings of going, beginning-to-go, and coming-to-rest have similar problems.

Verses 18–21. It doesn't make sense to say that the goer is going, for then we could not distinguish (as we normally do) between the agent and the action. But neither can the goer be different from the going, for then each could exist without the other. In short, describing what happens in terms of some relationship between a goer and its going is unintelligible.

Verses 22–25. (In summary:) A goer doesn't exist before going, for that would imply two goings. A goer cannot go on the three places of going (mentioned above), a non-goer cannot go on them, nor can someone who both is and is not a goer (a contradiction) go on them. "Therefore going, goer, and place of going do not exist."

Perhaps we can understand why some consider the arguments above to be a "logical sleight-of-hand" that "resembles the shell game"[6]—but such a conclusion nonetheless misses the point. The import of the arguments above is that our usual way of understanding motion—which distinguishes the goer from the going and from the place of going—does not really make sense when examined carefully, for the interdependence of the three shows that each is unreal when considered apart from the others. Nāgārjuna's logic here (and in many other chapters) proceeds by demonstrating that once we have thus distinguished them—as ordinary language and "common sense" do—then it becomes impossible to understand their relation—a difficulty familiar enough to students of the mind-body problem. As Candrakīrti points out in his commentary to verse 23, the same argument also refutes our usual notions that a speaker speaks something and that an agent performs an action (the latter dualism being the topic of chapter 9). Very similar arguments are employed in chapters 4, 5, and 8 to deconstruct our usual understanding of a perceiver perceiving a perceptual object; in chapter 6 to deconstruct the duality between persons and their affections; and in chapter 5 to deconstruct the duality in its most general terms, between things and their attributes.

In chapter 2, perhaps we see the problem most clearly by inquiring into the status of that-which-moves: in itself, is it a mover or not? Neither answer makes sense. For a mover to then be moving would be redundant ("a second motion"), and a non-mover moving is a contradiction. In contemporary analytic terms, we might say that Nāgārjuna is pointing out a flaw in the ordinary language we use in describing (and hence in our ways of thinking about) motion and rest: our ascription of motion predicates to substantive objects is actually unintelligible. In everyday life we constantly fudge this, sometimes assuming that things exist apart from their predicates and at other times identifying things with their predicates (a good example is the relationship between me and "my" body). Nāgārjuna's dialectics demonstrates this inconsistency simply by distinguishing clearly between the possibilities. It may be that this tendency to distinguish substance from attribute reflects the inherent dualism of language: a statement predicates something *about* something, for learning a language is learning what things there *are* (nouns correspond to things) and what these things *do* (verbs correspond to actions and processes) or *have* (adjectives correspond to attributes). But that such a dualism is widespread and even in a certain sense necessary (the "lower truth") does not make it a correct description of the way things really are ("the higher truth"), according to Nāgārjuna.

This helps us to understand the point of the general Mādhyamika critique, by revealing what is being criticized: our usual, commonsense understanding of the world, which sees it as a collection of discrete entities (one of them myself) interacting causally "in" space and time. "Nāgārjuna's rampage through the notions of the philosophers is directed at uncovering their ultimate nonsense with a view to releasing men from humiliating bondage to them."[7] Yet Nāgārjuna attacks more than the philosophical fancies of Indian metaphysicians, for there is a metaphysics, although an inconsistent one, inherent in our everyday view—most personally and painfully in the contradiction between my sense of myself as something nontemporal and unchanging (i.e., as distinct from my attributes, such as body) and the awareness that I am growing older and subject to death (indistinguishable from attributes such as "my" body). It is one or another aspect of this dualistic view that is made absolute in systematic metaphysics. This commonsense understanding is what makes the world *saṁsāra* for us, and it is this *saṁsāra* that Nāgārjuna is concerned with deconstructing.

It is a consequence of our taken-for-granted distinction between things and their attributes that I now perceive the room I am writing in not nondually, but as a collection of books and chairs and pens and paper—and *me*—each of which is unreflectively taken to be distinct from all the others and to persist unchanged until affected by something else. The causal relation (Nāgārjuna's primary example of an attribute) is what we use to explain the interaction among things that are distinct from each other. If causality explains the interaction between things, then these things in themselves must be noncausal, and, by no coincidence, this is precisely our commonsense notion of what an object is: a thing whose continued existence does not need to be explained, for once created it "self-exists." The objectivity of the world (including the "subjectification" of myself as a thing in it but apart from it) depends upon this dualism between things and their attributes/causal relations. This constitutes *saṁsāra* because it is by hypostatizing such a "thingness" out of the flux of experience that we become attached to things—again, the primal attachment being (to) the sense of self. Yet what we experience as such self-existing objects *(svabhāva)* are thought-constructed reifications, a shorthand way of remembering that our perceptions tend to have a certain stability, which allows us to relate them together and form expectations. This may be a necessary habit for us (which is why it is a lower *truth*), but such reifications create a delusive bifurcation between objects and their attributes (which is why it is a *lower* truth).

This point about the way we perceive the world is important because without it one might conclude that Nāgārjuna's critique of self-existence *svabhāva* is a refutation of something no one believes in anyway. One does not escape his critique by

defining entities in a more commonsense fashion as coming into and passing out of existence. The logic of the *Kārikās* demonstrates that there is no tenable middle ground between self-existence independent of all conditions—an empty set—and the complete conditionality of *śūnya* phenomena. Nāgārjuna's arguments against self-existence show the inconsistency in our everyday, taken-for-granted way of "taking" the world: while we accept that things change, we also assume that they remain the same—both of which conditions are necessary if they are to be things that have causal relations. Recognizing this inconsistency, previous Indian philosophers tried to resolve it by making one of these two aspects absolute at the price of the other. But the *satkaryavāda* substance-view of Advaita and Sāṅkhya emphasizes permanence at the price of not being able to account for change, while the *asatkaryavāda* modal-view of Sautrāntika Buddhism has the opposite problem of not being able to provide the connecting thread necessary for continuity. Chapter 1 of the *Kārikās* argues, in effect, that any understanding of cause-and-effect that tries to connect these two *separate* things can be reduced to the contradiction of both asserting and denying identity. Nāgārjuna concludes that their "relationship" is incomprehensible and therefore, from the highest point of view, unreal.

In sum, there is something confused and deluded about our ordinary understanding of the world; because it dualizes substance from attribute, subject from predicate, permanence from change. Instead of attempting to supply the "correct view," however, the Mādhyamika simply deconstructs this commonsense understanding, a removal which allows something else—obvious but hitherto overlooked—to manifest.

With the benefit of hindsight, however, we can notice that Nāgārjuna's critique of such dualisms itself generates another dualism, one that during the following millennium would become increasingly problematical: that between language and silence. This dualism became so important because it reflects an essential and perhaps inescapable dualism at the heart of Buddhism: between delusion (of which language is a vehicle) and enlightenment (to which silence is believed to point).

Nāgārjuna, of course, is very sensitive to the dualism of *saṁsāra* and *nirvāṇa*, and its deconstruction in chapter 25 forms the climax of the *Kārikās*: there is not the slightest difference between them, for the limits *(kotih)* of the one are the limits of the other (verses 19–20); that which arises and passes away (i.e., *saṁsāra*), when taken noncausally and without dependence, is *nirvāṇa* (verse 9). Its beatitude *(śivah)* is the coming-to-rest of all ways of taking things *(sarvopalambhopaśamah)*, the repose of named things *(prapañcopaśamah)*, which is why no truth has ever been taught by any Buddha to anyone anywhere (verse 24).

The problem, however, is that this solution to the dualism of delusion and enlightenment resolves the tension between them only by displacing it onto another dualism between the manifold world of named things *(prapañca)* and its coming-to-rest in silence *(prapañcopaśamah)*. If *nirvāṇa* involves realizing the *śūnyatā* of *saṁsāra*, for Nāgārjuna that "emptiness" involves the cessation of thought-construction. Some translations of 25:24 de-emphasize this cessation,[8] but many other passages in the *Kārikās* leave no doubt as to Nāgārjuna's perspective on this matter: from the ultimate point of view no predication is possible. The dedicatory verses that begin the *Kārikās* also emphasize that *prapañcopaśamah* is the way things truly are *(pratītyasamutpāda)*, a claim echoed in 18:9 (where *tattva* "suchness" is characterized by lack of mental fabrication), in 13:8 *(śūnyatā* is *sarvadṛṣṭīnām proktā niḥsaranama* "the relinquishing of all views"), and again even in the final verse of the *Kārikās*, 26:30, where the author bows to Gautama, whose compassion "taught the true doctrine which leads to the relinquishing of all views."[9]

Nāgārjuna is well aware of the tension intrinsic to the claim that the true characterization of the nature of things is that things cannot be conceptually characterized. His solution, of course, is the two-truths doctrine. *All* predication is part of the lower truth. Candrakīrti's commentary on 13:8 quotes the *Ratnakūta Sūtra* to make the point that *śūnyatā* is a medicine that must itself be expelled in order for the patient to recover fully. Since *śūnyatā* is itself *śūnya*, one uses that lower truth to climb up a ladder that, finally, is kicked away. The Wittgenstein analogy is appropriate because Nāgārjuna would also agree with the conclusion to the *Tractatus*: "7. What we cannot speak about we must pass over in silence."[10] For the Buddhist tradition as it developed thereafter, however, this solution to the dualism of *saṁsāra* and *nirvāṇa* left a legacy that bifurcated too sharply between the lower and the higher truths, between means and ends, between thought/language and the peace that surpasses understanding. In the centuries that followed, these bifurcations reappeared in various doctrinal forms, especially in East Asian controversies about our "Buddha-nature." Significantly, the crux of these debates may also be expressed in terms of substance and attribute, subject and predicate: is enlightened mind intrinsic or adventitious, something we already have or something we need to gain?

By no coincidence, this is precisely the issue in the dialectic between original enlightenment *(hongaku)* and acquired enlightenment *(shikaku)* that is said to have preoccupied the young Dōgen: if we are endowed with the Dharma-nature by birth, why did all the Buddhas strive for enlightenment by engaging in spiritual practice? *Hongaku* seems to encourage a self-satisfied quietism complacent in its delusions, *shikaku* a self-stultifying split between means and ends, as we strive to *become* what we *are*. We shall see that Dōgen's solution to this dilemma not only transformed the understanding of the relationship between practice and enlightenment; it also led to a radically new appreciation of how language can combat its own mystifications.

What Does Dōgen Deconstruct?

> Language and symbols circumscribe; but, as living forces, they are dynamic enough to open up, constantly re-expressing, renewing, and casting-off, so as to unfold new horizons of their own life. In this way language and symbols know no limits with respect to how far they can penetrate both conceptually and symbolically. No Buddhist thinker was more intensely and meticulously involved with the exploration of each and every linguistic possibility of Buddhist concepts and symbols—even those forgotten, displaced ones—than Dōgen who endeavored to appropriate them in the dynamic workings of the Way's realization. (Hee-Jin Kim)[11]

Nāgārjuna's dialectical arguments are foreign to Dōgen. In fact, the *Shōbōgenzō* is interested not in Buddhist philosophy as such, but in semantic analysis of passages from Buddhist *Sūtras* and Ch'an texts. Such analyses are not inspired by any conventional piety toward such scriptures, for Dōgen offers many deliberate, and often brilliant, "misinterpretations" of these passages. By his readiness to transgress the traditional readings and contradict orthodox teachings, Dōgen is able to challenge our usual understanding and generate a new way of "taking" the world freed from our usual linguistic dualisms, including conventional Buddhist ones such as that between language and silence.

Hee-Jin Kim's exegesis of Dōgen's analytical methods distinguishes seven different techniques in the *Shōbōgenzō*.[12] Although these overlap and are not exhaustive, we begin by summarizing what Kim says about how each of these functions, followed by an attempt to understand what these techniques imply about language and how language can be utilized from the enlightened point of view. Below are only a few of the many examples that could be cited for each technique.

Transposition of Lexical Components

A simple example is Dōgen's discussion of *tō-higan* 到彼岸 ("reaching the other shore") in the *Bukkyō* 佛經 fascicle, which transposes the two characters into *higan-tō* 彼岸到, "the other shore's arrival" or "the other shore has arrived." The original meaning of *higan* ("the other shore," i.e., *nirvāṇa*) dualizes between a future event and one's present practice aimed at attaining that event. The transcribed term no longer refers to a future event but emphasizes the event of realization right here and now.

In the *Mujō-seppō* 無情說法 fascicle, *seppō* 說法 "preaching the dharma" is reversed in the same way to become *hō-setsu* 法說 "the dharma's preaching." This allows Dōgen to say: "This 'discourse on the Dharma' is 'the Dharma's discourse.'" There is no duality (trinity?) between the speaker, the speaking, and the Dharma that is spoken about.

Semantic Reconstruction through Syntactic Change

Perhaps the best-known example is in the *Busshō* 佛性 fascicle, which quotes from the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*: "All sentient beings without exception have Buddha-nature" *(issai no shujō wa kotogotoku busshō ari)*. Dōgen rearranges the syntactical components to make them mean: all sentient beings, that is, all existence, *is* Buddha-nature *(issai shujō shitsuu-busshō* 一切眾生、悉有佛性*)*. Buddha-nature is no longer an *attribute* of sentient beings, something that needs to be actualized. Sentient beings and "their" Buddha-nature are nondual.

Another example of this reconstruction, to the same end, occurs in the *Juki* 授記 fascicle. *Juki* refers to the Buddha's prediction of a disciple's future enlightenment, but Dōgen refigures the phrase *masani anokutara-sammyaku-sambodai o ubeshi* ("They shall attain supreme, perfect enlightenment") into *tōtoku anokutara-sammyaku-sambodai* 當得阿耨多羅三藐三菩提 ("They have certainly attained supreme, perfect enlightenment"). The assurance of a future event is transformed into testimony to a present condition.

Explication of Semantic Attributes

In the *Uji* 有時 fascicle, Dōgen takes the common term *arutoki* ("at a certain time," "sometimes," "once") and reinterprets its components *aru* or *u* ("to be") and *toki* or *ji* ("time," "occasion") to make *uji*, "being-time," which he uses to signify the nonduality of existence and time, that is, things and their temporal attributes. In other fascicles Dōgen makes the same point by reducing each of these two concepts to the other, saying that *objects are time* (objects have no self-existence because they are necessarily temporal, in which case they are not objects in the usual sense) and, conversely, that *time is objects* (time manifests itself not *in* but *as* the ephemera we call objects, in which case time is different from what it is usually understood to mean). "The time we call spring blossoms directly as an existence called flowers. The flowers, in turn, express the time called spring. This is not existence within time; existence itself is time."[13] If there are no nouns, there are no referents for temporal predicates. When there are no things that have an existence apart from time, then it makes no sense to speak of things as being young or old. Nāgārjuna had drawn the same conclusion: "Becoming other is not comprehensible either of the same thing [for then it is not the *same* thing] or of another thing [for then it is not the *same thing*]. So the young man does not grow old nor does the old man grow old."[14]

In a famous passage in the first fascicle of the *Shōbōgenzō*, "Genjō-kōan" 現成公按, the image of firewood and ashes is used to make the same point about things and "their" time:

> Firewood becomes ash, and it does not become firewood again. Yet, do not suppose that the ash is future and the firewood past. You should understand that firewood abides in the phenomenal expression of firewood, which fully includes past and future and is independent of past and future. Ash abides in the phenomenal expression of ash, which fully includes future and past. Just as firewood does not become firewood again after it is ash, you do not return to birth after death.
>
> This being so, it is an established way in buddha-dharma to deny that birth turns into death. Accordingly, birth is understood as no-birth. It is an unshakeable teaching in Buddha's discourse that death does not turn into birth. Accordingly, death is understood as no-death.
>
> Birth is an expression complete this moment. Death is an expression complete this moment. They are like winter and spring. You do not call winter the beginning of spring, nor summer the end of spring.[15]

The beginning seems to echo Nāgārjuna's deconstruction of the duality between fire and fuel in chapter 10 of the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, but Dōgen's explication brings the issue home more directly to our own lives. Because life and death, like spring and summer, are not *in* time, they are timeless. And if there is no one nontemporal who is born and dies, then there are only the events of birth and death. But if there are only those events, with no one *in* them, then there is no real birth and

death. Such is the consequence of the nonduality between me and that most uncomfortable attribute of all, "my" birth/death.

Reflexive, Self-causative Utterances

Dōgen uses repetition *(ji-ji* 時時 "time," *shō-shō* 生生 "birth," *butsu-butsu* 佛佛 "buddha," etc.) and identity statements ("mountains are mountains" and "emptiness is emptiness") for emphasis, and, taking advantage of the facility with which the Japanese language allows nouns to become verbs by adding the suffix *-su*, he delights in such Heideggerian-type expressions as "the sky skies the sky." These techniques are used to exemplify his notion of *ippō-gūjin* 一法究盡, "the total exertion of a single dharma." This key term embodies his dynamic understanding of interpenetration, according to which each dharma in the universe is both the cause and effect of all other dharmas. This interfusion means that the life of one dharma becomes the life of all dharmas, so that (as Zen masters like to say), *this* is the only thing in the whole universe. The application of *ippō-gūjin* to language allows words, too, to transcend dualism, as we shall see.

The Upgrading of Commonplace Notions and the Use of Neglected Metaphors

By Dōgen's time, a number of metaphors had become traditional as ways to contrast this world of suffering with the realm of enlightenment: for example, *gabyō* 畫餅 (pictured cakes, which cannot satisfy our hunger), *kūge* 空華 (literally, sky-flowers, seen when the eye is defective, and hence a metaphor for illusory perceptions), *kattō* 葛藤 (entangling vines, meaning worldly attachments), and *mu* 夢 (a dream, as opposed to being awake). In this way, too, Buddhist teachings that work to deconstruct dualisms created new ones, and in the thousand years between Nāgārjuna and Dōgen these images had ossified to become more problematical. Here, too, Dōgen's "misinterpretations" revitalize these depreciated terms by denying the dualism implicit in each. Instead of dismissing pictures (i.e., concepts), the *Gabyō* fascicle emphasizes their importance by transforming *gabyō wa ue ni mitazu* ("pictured cakes do not satisfy hunger") into *gabyō wa fu-ju-ki* 畫餅不充饑 ("pictured cakes are no-satisfaction-hunger"), escaping the dualism of hunger and satisfaction into the nondualism of a hunger that, because it is itself ultimate reality, lacks nothing: "Because the entire world and all dharmas are unequivocally pictures, men and dharmas are actualized through pictures, and the buddhas and patriarchs are perfected through pictures."

The *Kūge* fascicle revalorizes *kūge*, usually castigated as illusions, into "flowers of emptiness"; in place of the typical Buddhist duality between reality and delusion, "all dharmas of the universe are the flowers of emptiness." Instead of the usual admonition to cut off all entangling vines, the *Kattō* fascicle emphasizes the importance of worldly relationships such as the dharmic connection between teacher and student, which leads to ever-increasing understanding of the Dharma. And "all dharmas in the dream state as well as in the waking state are equally ultimate reality.... Dream and waking are equally ultimate reality: no largeness or smallness, no superiority or inferiority has anything to do with them."[16]

The Use of Homophonous Expressions

In addition to employing associative techniques such as interweaving *shozan* 諸山 "all the mountains" with *shosui* 諸水 "all the waters" to vividly present the nonduality of mountain and water in the *Sansuikyō* 山水經 fascicle, Dōgen uses homophonous word pairs—puns—to reinforce his meaning. In the *Gabyō* fascicle, for example, the phrase *shobutsu kore shō naru yueni shobutsu kore shō nari* 諸佛これ證なるゆゑに、諸物これ證なり ("Because all the Buddhas are verification, all things are verification") identifies *shobutsu* "all the Buddhas" with *shobutsu* "all things."

Reinterpretation Based on the Principle of Absolute Emptiness

Dōgen "misinterprets" some of the most famous Zen stories to give them a radically different meaning—often one diametrically opposed to the traditional understanding. In the *Kattō* fascicle, for example, Dōgen challenges the traditional view of Bodhidharma's dharma transmission to his four disciples Tao-fu, Tsung-chih, Tao-yü, and Hui-k'o. According to their different responses to his challenge, Bodhidharma says that they have attained his skin, flesh, bones, and marrow, respectively—the last because Hui-k'o demonstrates the highest attainment by saying nothing at all. So it is, at least according to the usual view that sees these four attainments as metaphors for progressively deeper stages of understanding, indicating a hierarchy of rank among the disciples. Dōgen, however, repudiates this common view by adopting the absolute point of view:

> We should know that the patriarch's saying "skin, flesh, bones, and marrow" has no bearing on shallowness or deepness.... The patriarch's body-mind is such that the skin, flesh, bones, and marrow are all equally the patriarch himself: the marrow is not the deepest, the skin is not shallowest.[17]

Kim cites many other instances to demonstrate these "transgressive" techniques, but what we need to do now is characterize their function. Two points stand out.

First, Dōgen is doing more than twisting traditional texts to make them say whatever he wants them to mean. In the examples above, he is using the freedom of a poet to conflate a problematic dualism, that is, a deluded way of thinking that causes problems for us; and, despite the fact that this literary approach to language is so different from Nāgārjuna's dialectical one, in each case there is a parallel with deconstructions in the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*. For example, *hō-setsu* denies any duality between the one who preaches the dharma and the dharma that is taught, even as many chapters of the *Kārikās* challenge the duality between an agent and his or her action. *Uji* denies any duality between beings and their temporality, between springtime and its flowers, between us and our birth/death; this parallels Nāgārjuna's deconstruction of the difference between time and things in chapters 19 and 13. The *Busshō* fascicle denies the duality between sentient beings and their Buddha-nature, which may be seen as another instance of Nāgārjuna's repeated attack on the duality between things and their attributes. *Higan-tō* (like many other reconstructions) denies the usual duality between practice and realization (means and ends), just

as Nāgārjuna's *nirvāṇa* chapter deconstructs the usual Buddhist duality between *saṁsāra* and *nirvāṇa*.

In each case Dōgen, like Nāgārjuna, does not allow himself to be limited by the usual dualisms of our language, and of our thought. While Nāgārjuna's dialectic exposes the unintelligibility of these dualisms by showing how we cannot relate the two terms back together, Dōgen exploits the different resources of the Japanese language to concoct expressions that leap out of the bifurcations we get stuck in. For both thinkers, however, these deconstructions may be understood as conflations of various recurrences of the subject-predicate dualism: *nirvāṇa* is not something I can attain; the dharma is not something I can preach; Buddha-nature is not something I have (or do not have); "my" time is not something distinguishable from me. This is all the more striking because, although Dōgen sometimes refers to Nāgārjuna (Jpn: Ryuju), these references are largely confined to quotations and passages from various Chinese collections, and so far as I know they do not reveal any familiarity with the arguments in primary texts such as the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*.

However, this basic similarity also serves to highlight the differences between them. Part of this difference is emphasis, a shift in focus necessary to respond to the historical development of Buddhist teachings in the thousand years between them—a development due in no small part to Nāgārjuna's enormous influence. As we have seen, the dualisms that most preoccupy Dōgen are versions of the practice/enlightenment–means/ends bifurcation. Granted, *nirvāṇa* is not something that can be attained, but it still needs to be realized, and by his time many traditional Ch'an/Zen stories and metaphors designed to encourage this process had themselves become more problematical than helpful, in his view.

Dōgen's revaluation of commonplace Buddhist metaphors in particular leaves us no doubt about his understanding of language—which is where the difference of emphasis between Nāgārjuna and Dōgen becomes a more significant difference of perspective. Concepts, metaphors, parables, and so forth are not just instrumental, convenient means to communicate truth, for they themselves manifest the truth—or rather, since that is still too dualistic, they themselves are the truth that we need to realize. "Metaphor in Dōgen's sense is not that which points to something other than itself, but that in which something realizes itself," summarizes Kim. "In short, the symbol is not a means to edification but an end in itself—the workings of ultimate truth."[18] As Dōgen himself puts it in the *Muchū-setsumu* 夢中説夢 fascicle: "The Buddha-dharma, even if it is a metaphor, is ultimate reality." If I do not try to get some graspable truth *from* the metaphor, it can be a way my mind consummates itself: although symbols can be redeemed only by mind, the mind does not function in a vacuum but is activated by—or *as*—symbols.

In the *Sansuikyō* fascicle, Dōgen criticizes those who have only an instrumentalist view of language and who think that kōans are simply nonsensical ways to cut off thought: "How pitiable are they who are unaware that discriminating thought is words and phrases, and that words and phrases liberate discriminating thought." What a challenge to the traditional Buddhist dualism between language and reality:

the goal is not to eliminate concepts but to *liberate* them! Despite their problematical aspects, "words are not essentially different from things, events, or beings—all 'alive' in Dōgen's thought."[19]

In an important essay on language in the Ch'an/Zen experience, Dale Wright has argued that such awakening is not *from* language but *to* language. As in Gadamer's hermeneutics, language is less an obstructing barrier than a reservoir of possibilities becoming available to those not trapped within its dualistic categories, not a clothing that hides truth but a medium that manifests it—in short, not a veil but a window. "Far from being a transcendence of language," concludes Wright, "this process would consist in a fundamental reorientation within language [that] would require training to a level of fluency in distinctive, nonobjectifying, rhetorical practices."[20]

Within the Buddhist tradition, this move from transcendence of language to reorientation within it is perhaps best exemplified by the difference between Nāgārjuna and Dōgen. The latter shows us that words and metaphors can be understood not just as instrumentally trying to grasp and convey truth (and therefore dualistically interfering with our realization of some truth that transcends words), but as *being* the truth—that is, as being one of the many ways that Buddha-nature *is*. To the many dualisms that Nāgārjuna deconstructs, then, Dōgen explicitly adds one more: he denies the dualism between language and the world. If *we* are the ones who dualize, why blame the victims? A birdsong, a temple bell ringing, a flower blooming, and Dōgen's transpositions, too, blossoming for us as we read them: if we do not dualize between world and word, then we can experience the Buddha-dharma—our own "empty" nature—presencing and playing in each.[21]

A Scheme We Cannot Throw Off?

> Now we read disharmonies and problems into things because we think only in the form of language—and thus believe in the "eternal truth" of "reason" (e.g., subject, attribute, etc.).... *Rational thought is interpretation according to a scheme that we cannot throw off.* (Nietzsche)[22]

Both Buddhist thinkers exploit the very different strengths of their respective languages. The complex syntax of Nāgārjuna's sophisticated Sanskrit permits precise and terse philosophical analysis. The looser syntax of Dōgen's Japanese, due to the greater flexibility and ambiguity of its Chinese ideographs, allows a poetic allusiveness that lends itself to his semantic transpositions. We have seen that this difference is further reflected in their respective attitudes toward language: to Nāgārjuna it seems to be fundamentally problematical, for he limits himself to employing it negatively, solely to deconstruct the dualities that are delusive (from the higher point of view) although necessary in daily life (from the lower point of view). In contrast, Dōgen views and uses language more positively, by emphasizing the innovative possibilities that Chinese and Japanese encourage but Nāgārjuna's philosophical Sanskrit apparently did not.

I wonder how much the languages themselves contribute to this difference. Do Nāgārjuna's and Dōgen's different approaches perhaps reflect different "mental spaces" created in employing the different types of script? The meaning of an alphabetic script is derivative (or representational) because it converts letters into sounds, while Chinese and Japanese ideographs express their meaning more directly, without speech. How such a non-oral/aural meaning could arise is suggested by the peculiar origin of Chinese characters. According to Simon Leys, the earliest Chinese inscriptions "did not record language, but meanings—directly, and speechlessly: they transcended language."

> This Chinese emblematic meta-language developed independently from contemporary speech. For convenience, however, the written characters were progressively given conventional sounds; thus, eventually the inscriptions did not merely convey silent meanings, they could also be read aloud. In the end, they themselves generated a language—monosyllabic and non-inflected (features that remain as the special marks of its artificial origin)—and since this language carried all the prestige of magic and power, it gradually supplanted the vernacular originally spoken.[23]

Perhaps an alphabetic script is more likely to suggest a representational understanding of meaning and truth: as letters represent sounds, so words re-present things, implying that language is something superimposed on the world. In contrast, an ideographic script seems to de-emphasize such a duality between thought and words, between meaning and reality, encouraging instead the view that thought *is* (part of) reality.

Finally, however, what was more important for Buddhism is that the very different resources of these different languages—Nāgārjuna's alphabetic Sanskrit and Dōgen's ideographic Japanese—could be tapped for the same end: deconstructing the dualisms implicit in our usual ways of "taking" the world, most of them variations of the fundamental one between subject and predicate, substance and attribute. By dividing up the world into things and their relations, and most of all by distinguishing my sense-of-self from the world I live and act "in," I overlook something important about the actual nature of that world.

This parallel suggests that Nietzsche was wrong when he reflected that "rational thought is interpretation according to a scheme that we cannot throw off." Nāgārjuna and Dōgen both demonstrate, in their different ways, that language at its best can work against its own mystifications. However, neither of them believed that such conceptual deconstructions are, in themselves, sufficient to escape the disease that plagues us insofar as we feel separate from the world (from our bodies, our actions, our death). Both took for granted a religious context that provided the situation for their philosophical enterprises, a rich heritage of ethical and meditative practices provided by the Buddhist tradition to help us transform our mode of experiencing the world. They knew that the most important deconstruction extends beyond language to deconstruct the delusive duality between my sense-of-self and the world.[24]

Notes

1 – Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols* [1889], trans. R. J. Hollingdale (Harmondsworth: Penguin Classic, 1969), p. 38; his own emphasis here and elsewhere.

2 – Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Wanderer and his Shadow* [1880], in *Human, All Too Human,* trans. R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 306.

3 – David J. Kalupahana, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā of Nāgārjuna: The Philosophy of the Middle Way* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1991), Introduction, pp. 35–36.

4 – Frederick J. Streng, *Emptiness: A Study in Religious Meaning* (Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon, 1967), pp. 181–182.

5 – L. Stafford Betty, "Nāgārjuna's Masterpiece—Logical, Mystical, Both, or Neither?" *Philosophy East and West* 33 (2) (April 1983): 125–126.

6 – Ibid., p. 135.

7 – Mervyn Sprung, in the introduction to his translation of *Lucid Exposition of the Middle Way* (Boulder, Colorado: Prajñā Press, 1979), Candrakīrti's classical commentary on the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, p. 6. My references to the original Sanskrit text are from J. E. deJong's edition (Madras: Adyar Library and Research Centre, 1977).

8 – For example, Kalupahana translates the first half of 25:24 as "The appeasement of all objects, the appeasement of obsession" (p. 369), and Jay Garfield (in *The Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way: Nāgārjuna's Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* [New York: Oxford University Press, 1995]) translates the same as "The pacification of all objectification/And the pacification of all illusion" (p. 76). But elsewhere (e.g., in his discussion on pp. 353–359), Garfield, too, emphasizes the cessation of predication and conceptual construction. My version of 25:24 follows Sprung (*Lucid Exposition,* p. 262). The basic difficulty is that, although important both in Pāli Buddhism and in Mādhyamaka, the meaning of *prapañca* is unclear and controversial. Etymology yields *pra* + *pañc,* "spreading out" in the sense of manifoldness and ramification; it seems to refer to some indeterminate "interface" between perception and thought. In his book on the concept, Ñānananda defines its primary meaning as "the tendency towards proliferation in the realm of concepts," but this loses the connection with perception. See his *Concept and Reality in Early Buddhist Thought* (Kandy, Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society, 1971), pp. 3–4.

9 – See also 18:7; 22:11, 12, 15; and 24:18.

10 – In this context the final verse is often quoted, yet the previous one is just as relevant as an elucidation of the Mādhyamaka position: "6.54. My propositions serve as elucidations in the following way: anyone who understands me eventually recognizes them as nonsensical, when he has used them—as steps—to

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climb up beyond them. (He must, so to speak, throw away the ladder after he has climbed up it.) He must transcend these propositions, and then he will see the world aright" (Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, trans. D. F. Pears and B. F. McGuinness [London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961], p. 151).

11 – Hee-Jin Kim, "Method and Realization: Dōgen's Use of the Kōan Language" (unpublished paper presented at a conference on "The Significance of Dōgen," Tassajara Zen Mountain Center, 8–11 October 1981), p. 9.

12 – For more examples, see Hee-Jin Kim, "'The Reason of Words and Letters': Dōgen and Kōan Language," in William R. LaFleur, ed., *Dōgen Studies* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1985), pp. 54–82. The typology is on pp. 61–78. My analysis of Dōgen's deconstructive techniques largely follows this essay, with the exception of the discussion of time (in technique number 3), which offers my own understanding of Dōgen's view of time.

13 – As quoted in Masunaga Reiho, *The Sōtō Approach to Zen* (Tokyo: Layman Buddhist Society Press, 1958), p. 68.

14 – *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* XIII.5, in Sprung, *Lucid Exposition*, p. 147.

15 – "Genjō-kōan," trans. Dan Welch and Kazuaki Tanahashi, in *Moon in a Dewdrop: Writings of Zen Master Dōgen*, ed. Kazuaki Tanahashi (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1985), pp. 70–71.

16 – In the *Muchū-setsumu* fascicle; see Kim, "The Reason of Words and Letters," pp. 71–72.

17 – As translated in Kim, "The Reason of Words and Letters," p. 75.

18 – Hee-Jin Kim, *Dōgen Kigen—Mystical Realist* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1975), p. 110.

19 – Kim, "The Reason of Words and Letters," pp. 57, 58.

20 – Dale Wright, "Rethinking Transcendence: The Role of Language in Zen Experience," *Philosophy East and West* 42 (1) (January 1992): 125, 131, 133.

21 – For a more detailed comparison between Dōgen and Eckhart, with reference to Derridean deconstruction, see David Loy, "Dead Words, Living Words, and Healing Words: The Dissemination of Dōgen and Eckhart," in David Loy, ed., *Healing Deconstruction: Postmodern Thought in Buddhism and Christianity* (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1996).

22 – Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, trans. Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale (New York: Vintage, 1968), no. 522, p. 283.

23 – Simon Leys, "One More Art," *New York Review of Books*, 18 April 1996, pp. 29–30.

24 – For more on this type of deconstruction, see David Loy, *Lack and Transcendence: The Problem of Death and Life in Psychotherapy, Existentialism, and Buddhism* (Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1996).

MICROGENESIS AND BUDDHISM: THE CONCEPT OF MOMENTARINESS

Jason W. Brown
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There have been few attempts to relate Buddhist thought to current trends in brain psychology. This is not surprising since the dominant force in contemporary psychology, that of a modular cognitivism, considers mental contents to be logical solids that interact in a function space—an approach that is incompatible with a metaphysics of relation and change, and equally inhospitable to process philosophy.[1] The temporality that is central to Buddhist metaphysics, and foundational to all phenomenal entities, has been largely eliminated from the reified objects of psychology, which severs the temporal relations between modules and reinserts them in the connectivity.

The aim of this article is to bring to the attention of Buddhist scholars another approach to the human mind, one that has developed out of the study of the symptoms of individuals with brain damage. This account, the microgenetic theory of cognition, had its beginnings with the disorders of language (aphasia) that result from damage to focal brain areas. The various forms of aphasia were interpreted as anticipatory phases in the neurocognitive actualization or becoming of an utterance. Gradually, it became clear that the brain model of language was applicable to the account of action and perception as hierarchic systems of momentary actualization. Indeed, such a range of clinical phenomena could be explained by this theory that microgenesis appeared to constitute a general model of brain and behavior.

According to the theory, the mind/brain state is a continuous sheet of process from self to world, rhythmically generated out of a subcortical core and distributed over phases to a neocortical rim.[2] The basic operation is a cascade of whole-to-part or context-to-item transformations in which parts arise out of wholes through constraints on emergent form at successive phases. The progression is from the archaic to the recent in brain evolution, from the past to the present—loosely, from memory to perception—in a momentary cognition, from unity to multiplicity, and from the intrapsychic to the extrapersonal. Mental process is unidirectional, obligatory, and recurrent. The complete sequence from depth to surface constitutes the mind/brain state. In this theory, reality is not the starting point but the goal of an act of knowledge.

In the course of a reflection on the metaphysics of microgenetic theory, so many areas of correspondence to early Buddhist thought are evident—the arising and perishing of phases, the recurrence of moments, the phenomenal quality of perceptions—that one might suppose it to have been the starting point of the work in neurology. Indeed, for many years, after lectures on theoretical psychology I have

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climb up beyond them. (He must, so to speak, throw away the ladder after he has climbed up it.) He must transcend these propositions, and then he will see the world aright" (Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus,* trans. D. F. Pears and B. F. McGuinness [London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961], p. 151).

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often been asked—to my dismay, I admit—whether my work on microgenesis was inspired by Buddhist philosophy.

Though roughly aware of the idealist tendencies in Buddhism, namely momentariness and perspectivalism, it is only now, after the theory has reached a degree of maturity of exposition, that I have been motivated to explore the topic in greater detail to determine if there are some principles in common. The concept of momentariness that motivates this article is but one example of a convergence. However, even certain of the contradictions in Buddhism can be aligned with microgenetic concepts, for example the concept of a succession of phases in a moment that is itself nontemporal.

The Buddhist Concept of the Moment

The Mādhyamika concept of momentariness or dependent co-origination *(pratītya-samutpāda)* holds that every entity is a series of momentary states bound together by similarity. An entity is reproduced through a replication of its states. Each moment comprises a state of the entity, though a complete entity is the result of an imaginative reconstruction over a series of states. The sequence of the replications is linked together in the mind through the rapid succession of similar moments. This gives the continuity of experience and the appearance of persistence. Satkari Mookerjee writes that the arrow in its flight "is not one but many arrows successively appearing in the horizon, which give rise to the illusion of a persistent entity owing to continuity of similar entities."[3] The judgment of similarity and the illusion that similar replicates constitute a single entity are subjective features.

In early (Abhidharmika) Buddhism, every entity was conceived as a discrete element, and was held to emerge and perish in its entirety. A relational theory of causal induction was applied to elements in sequence.[4] In a transition across elements, the entity did not become another entity but was replaced by the next in the succession. This was compared by T.R.V. Murti—like Henri Bergson, from a different perspective—to a movie strip with full stops and replacements, the observer filling in the gaps. The price of this atomism of the moment, however, was an inability to account for change. The entity, in Mookerjee's words, is "destitute of all continuity," without a past or a future. If the continuity of changeless entities arises through a subjective addition, that is, as a "fiction of the understanding," then how does subjectivity contribute change to entities that are otherwise changeless?

Continuity and comparison were problems for an encapsulated theory of the moment. In later writings, the transition from one moment to the next was conceived as governed by the causal laws of pure succession without an underlying substratum on which the laws were operative. Some commentators, most notably Ratnakīrti, emphasized that a unity of the self was necessarily prior to the individual momentary entities, in order to give them coherence. Yet if the self is a sequence of moments just like the entities it perceives, how does the fusion of moments occur? In an *anātman* theory (no self or soul), the coherence and the duration of entities cannot be explained unless an antecedent entity is postulated through which the phenomenal experience occurs. The assumption in Yogācāra of a consciousness anterior to experience attempts to resolve this difficulty but introduces problems of its own.

Every account of the phenomenal world requires an experiential thickness. At the most basic level, to say that a cognition is not a simple entity but emerges into being impregnated with the impression of the previous cognition might address the experience of continuity, or at least the lack of awareness of discontinuity, but if all there is in the momentary state is a subtle departure from the state of the preceding moment—a departure that is nonconscious, for consciousness would entail a comparison across two states, not just a changed present state—there is still no accounting of (the illusion of) duration and identity.

Duration

According to the most central concepts of Buddhism, a moment *(kṣaṇa)* is not a time-slice that is demarcated and infinitely divisible; the moment is not infinitely brief but has a certain thickness that is fundamental. This thickness differs from a duration that is conceived as a psychic addition. The moment is epochal and atomic without incrementation; it is a minimal unit of time that itself is nontemporal.

The thickness of a moment is conceived as a durationless point in a continuum that has no definite boundaries. Stcherbatsky compared a moment—"a momentary flashing into the phenomenal world out of an unknown source"—to a point in space-time. The duration of the moment is "the smallest particle of time imaginable."[5] For Murti, "a thing is a point-instant, having neither a "before" nor an "after." Murti writes that the moment has no temporal span, and thus no duration.[6] The duration of the moment is bound up with a theory of momentary states of consciousness that are the phenomenal equivalents of atomic point-instants. Consciousness and the duration of conscious experience are thought-constructions of the contiguities and simultaneities of the momentary flashings.

I would agree with those commentators on Buddhist thought who hold that duration is added by the mind to the series of changing points, not secondarily through a recombination but implicitly in the act of perception (see below).[7] It is not sufficient, however, to argue that duration is a contribution of the mind to entities that are durationless. Such entities depend on the cognitive laws that govern the process of "thought-construction," and these laws are as yet unknown.

In microgenetic theory, as in the writings of Henri Bergson, the duration of an actuality is the primary datum; the points or instants are artifacts. Without a duration, consciousness is not possible. The duration extends to the barest points since even these are conceptual. According to this view, one needs an explication of the process through which a duration is established and from which the points are extracted, not an account of duration as a sum or an aggregate of points.

The moment arises and perishes. The thickness of the moment must accommodate its kinetic phases, that is, the initial phase of arising and the terminal phase of perishing. In a slice there is no width for even such a characterization; indeed, in a slice there is no dynamic, no relation. The phases of a moment are successive; the arising and perishing do not occur simultaneously. In some accounts, a nascent phase of arising and a cessant phase of perishing enclose an intermediate phase of abiding.[8] This intermediate phase is not a stasis but a segment of change that is neither an origination nor a termination.

In other accounts, there is no distinction of phases but rather a continuous perishing. Mookerjee describes a perishing that is intrinsic to the entity. The entity is its changing states. All entities come into existence and pass out of existence, not in the sense of a passing in and out of nonexistence, though this is a topic of controversy, but of a passing from one state of existence to another state of existence. The change across different states does not necessarily entail a transition from existence to nonexistence and back again. The perishing is the "ground" of the arising. An entity cannot arise from nothing. An entity cannot perish to nothing.

The problem of arising (from nothing) and perishing (to nothing) has occupied many of the best minds in Buddhist thought, especially with regard to the causal process that binds one entity to the next. In my view, the problem of a perishing into nonexistence is a confusion of an entity with an identity, the construal of a nonexistence with a change in the identity of an entity, not the assumption by the entity of an altered state. The entity is no longer the same entity and in that sense no longer exists (as that entity), but one ought not to confuse nonexistence with unreality or nonbeing. The nonexistence of an occurrent entity at an antecedent or subsequent moment is its existence in another state, not its absolute nonexistence. The misconstrual of nonexistence with nonbeing results from a confusion of the momentariness of an entity with the persistence of that entity over the moments of its occurrence.

But within a moment, successive phases have been distinguished. The concept of a succession within a nontemporal span, or the concept of a nontemporal duration, is a paradoxical feature in the theory of universal flux. Unless every momentary state has some temporal width, a duration of some sort must be postulated to introduce process into instantaneous slices of physical immediacy.

In sum, an entity does not arise from nothing nor does it perish into nothing, but is a transition from one baseline state to the next. Something is retained in the causal transition that is the basis for the close replication. Otherwise, process would be chaotic. The antecedent state constrains the occurrent state, which then constrains the subsequent state. Within each moment of arising and perishing, there is no nesting of nascent/cessant pairs. Nor can a static phase of abiding be tolerated. The moment is a dynamic cycle that constitutes an indissoluble unit of existence.

An event arises and perishes in relation to immediately antecedent and consequent events. Since every event depends on, or is conditioned by, these relations, and since every event itself is a relation, the event cannot be distinguished from the conditions that cause it. Thus, the event has no substantial or settled nature. One cannot say that there is the event! In Abhidharmic Buddhism, this dependence was interpreted as a strict karmic determinism. The Sarvāstivādins were still bound to the Brahmanic idea of a self-nature *(svabhāva)* in which the essence of an element survives after its causal impact on the next event. The self-nature is the being or "entityhood" of the element. The Sautrāntikas denied self-nature.

The absence of substantiality or self-being in an element is a limit on its degree of actuality or realness. This creates the dilemma that either an element is substantial and real or impermanent and unreal. An event or moment as a segment in continuous change is impermanent, thus devoid of explicit content or essence, and, in this sense, unreal or "empty." In Mādhyamika, these two perspectives are in dialectical tension. The middle path avoids the rigid determinism and changeless persistence (eternalism) of substantialist theories and the blind chance, continuous change, and impersistence (annihilation) of relational theories.

While the development of the moment from a nascent to a cessant phase has often been described as a becoming, there is no process of specification from potential to actual comparable to that in Aristotelian thought or in process metaphysics. Rather, there is a progression from a phase of inception to one of termination. The concept of a potential is usually illustrated by an example such as the potential of a seed to become a sprout. This is not interpreted as the presentiment of the sprout in the seed, but in terms of a series of intervening causal pairs, that is, from an earlier to a later stage in a series of states. There are occasional accounts of a potentiality that develops or "ripens" into a cognition—by Candrakīrti, for example —but these do not seem to contain the concept of an individuation of entities from their generative ground.[9]

An essential ingredient in becoming is the many:one or whole:part relation. The frequent statements in Buddhist writings that there are no wholes, only parts, might be taken to indicate a rejection of the notion of becoming (of wholes into parts). Similarly, there is no progression to an actuality. The Buddhist moment does not progress toward realization. In becoming, in the process through which the individuality of an actual entity is achieved, there is a zeroing in on the definiteness of a realized particular. This "movement" toward individuality is not present, so far as I can tell, in Buddhist thought. Indeed, the process of individuation is dispersed through the concept of co-dependence to a mutuality of interpenetrated entities. Becoming is a process leading—in the metaphysics of Whitehead, for example—from a groundedness in the totality of eternal objects to the actuality of the one. In contrast, momentariness is the dependence of an entity throughout its transitional appearance on the totality of the universe at a given moment.

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In dependent co-origination, entities are interrelated throughout their phases: every phase in the sequence from nascent to cessant is as actual or as illusory as any other phase. In becoming, the "connectedness" or relation to all world entities of a given event—that is, the world-ground out of which an event is realized—is implicit only at the initial phase of potentiality. This phase is earlier in becoming and evolves to an actuality as an independent entity. Put differently, the dependent co-origination of a moment in Buddhism is a "horizontal" segment of change in which all phases are equivalent, while the becoming of process theory is a "vertical" unfolding out of time as the world is generated from potential.

These comments recall the process critique of the substantialism that is inherent in a "vacuous actuality," where the entity fails to achieve a state of subjective immediacy; that is, the perishing is the means by which an entity emerges from potential to become subjectively immediate. In the metaphysics of process thought and Buddhism, the actual does not attain the substantial in order to become real. The real is always relational in both the material and the mental world. Indeed, in some schools of Buddhism, the relational is enlarged to incorporate the before and the after of every momentary event. This is the positive aspect of the relational. The absence of autonomy entails the interpenetration of every event by every other event. To paraphrase Whitehead, every actuality is somewhere, while every potentiality is everywhere.

One does not have to arrest the process of change to achieve an actuality. Mind and world are populated with seemingly concrete entities. These entities are illusory in their stability, but the presence of stabilities demands an explanation of how the flux is carved up into the manifold of appearances. It is not enough to assume that the stability of an entity is the result of a rapid succession, with duration and seriality achieved as in a movie strip by an illusory fusion of a rapid continuity of similar entities (frames) in consciousness, like a phi phenomenon. As noted, this will not work if consciousness is also momentary, for then consciousness will require an explanation of its own capacity for fusion. The *anātman* position of Buddhism eliminates an absolute or enduring self that could account for the fusion of conscious moments. That is why the fundamental problem is the emergence of an entity. What is the minimal state of an entity—how can there be entities at all in a theory of continual flux; that is, how is an entity achieved in a moment that is durationless? Or, how are durationless moments compounded to the duration of an entity?

The phase of arising arises from a preceding phase of perishing. The perishing of the preceding moment is complete if the moment is atomic, but in some sense the autonomy of a past moment cannot be absolute without losing its continuity with the present moment. Disputation in Buddhist philosophy centers on the causal linkage between discrete moments, yet there is no theory of the moment itself. The moment is atomic, thus autonomous or indivisible, yet it is also relational, thus dependent and interpenetrated. How can the contradictory descriptions be resolved? The Buddha said of dependent arising or emptiness that it "is the exhaustion of all philosophical views. I call incurable whoever holds emptiness as a philosophical view." One is reminded of Wittgenstein's comparison of philosophy to an illness that is seeking a cure. But the relational theory of change on which emptiness is founded is a point of view. One gives up an attachment to other points of view to accept the view of emptiness, even if that view is viewless. Or perhaps my understanding is incomplete.[10]

The consequence of a momentariness that is pervasive and ruthlessly applied is that all knowledge is restricted to the present moment, which, if sufficiently brief—the duration of a chronon, for example[11]—could not permit experiential awareness. We live, so to say, on a knife edge of the present, even if that edge is blunted, with each present conceived as an arising/perishing that is renewed as a near replica of the immediate past. The self is also a momentary entity that is conditioned by the antecedent state. Since each state exists briefly and then passes away, how can the self introspect on its own nature? This requires a distinction of self and object in a duration sufficient for an explicit contrast. The awareness of such a contrast involves a temporal relation that, in a momentary state, would be possible only if virtual, or illusory.

Buddhism conceives a perception to be a constituent operation in the creation of the subject. The subject (self) cannot reflexively bind those perceptual moments that were ingredient in its formation. In early Buddhist thought, consciousness was held to vary with its contents. The awareness of a red object is a qualitatively different state of consciousness from the awareness of the same object when blue. In fact, the perception of a red object is a moment of a visual sensation, a moment of color, and a moment of pure consciousness arising more or less simultaneously. There is no consciousness *of* an object, no subject-object distinction, only an object consciousness or an object perception and a state of consciousness in close association. What there is in awareness—awareness and its objects—is, for the moment of that awareness, all there is.

Time

A theory of time was not initially a significant part of the concept of momentariness. For the Sarvāstivādins, the elements were nontemporal but their function was temporal. K. V. Ramanan writes that "the unit of time is the unit of function ... the minimum conceivable period (a moment) for the cycle of rising to function, carrying out the function and ceasing to function."[12] Time is in the arising and perishing of moments. The Mādhyamika of Nāgārjuna did not attempt to explain the genesis of moments or provide an account of past, present, and future in terms of a momentary Now.

Stcherbatsky notes that a point-instant "cut loose from all imagination" is timeless, and durationless, but it can be viewed (intuited, apprehended by a mind) as a particle of time, the empirical origins of which are impossible to conceive. In the school of Dharmakīrti, the timeless point-instant is a mathematical entity and the only reality in the universe. The point becomes a conscious present through the action of the imagination. The present, the now, fixes the past and the future and is essential for a direction of time. Stcherbatsky points out that the Sarvāstivādins raised

objections to the convention that only the present exists, or that the past exists no more or the future is unreal for it does not yet exist.[13]

A major theme in the Buddhist theory of causation is the emphasis on temporal succession or cumulative causation, that is, causal chains in the direction of "time's arrow," with the penetration of an event *(dharma)* conceived as a penetration by the immediate past or the totality of present causes rather than a backward causation from the future. Vasubandhu said that except for one's own self, all the elements of the universe are the general cause of an event. Charles Hartshorne has questioned whether in Buddhism there was a clear distinction of symmetric and asymmetric time. He wrote that in the tetralemmas of Nāgārjuna, the premises that earlier and later events may be mutually independent, interdependent, either, or both do not admit a time-asymmetric interpretation.[14]

In Yogācāra, because of the role of consciousness in the creation of the moment, the past and future are viewed as symmetrically embedded in the present state. There is a causal simultaneity. Past and future exist in the present by way of an impregnation or saturation of a perceptual consciousness-event. This concept is further developed in Hua-Yen, which entails a fully time-symmetric event causation, the past and the future collapsing on a single thought-instant in the present. The present is an island of immediacy surrounded and penetrated by an ocean of past and future time. This "simultaneous mutual fusion" involves the emergence of a momentary part-event from the totality of transpired and to-be-transpired experience. This whole-part relation is one between a context or field and a core. This relation, which is central to microgenetic theory, has been compared to that between horizon and core in Heidegger or ground and figure in the Gestaltists.[15] The emergence of an occurrent particular out of a holistic surrounding of spatiotemporal totality, in which an antecedent and a subsequent temporality are compresent in the actuality of the present, is a type of whole-to-part specification not encountered in linear accounts of momentariness.

The occasional time-symmetric tendencies in Buddhist thought are not the analogue of the isotropic time of Western science. Reversibility entails a linear time with a direction that is arbitrary. In these time-symmetric branches of Buddhist thought, time is conceived not so much as reversible as mutually determinate on the present. The causal inheritance from the past and the causal endowment to the future are both simultaneously active in the formation of the present. The present is the resolution in actuality of an eternity of surrounding time.

In a becoming, a construct that is in a state of simultaneity with respect to its potential elements emerges to a linear order of those elements in consciousness. Events serialize as they become actual. Asymmetric time is generated out of timelessness, as wakefulness out of dream, with the terminal segments of becoming forecast in the antecedent phases of potential. Specifically, data present at the nascent phase of a becoming develop into the temporal facts of perceptual experience. This occurs through a transition from the wholeness of simultaneity to the partness of temporal sequence. This is not a symmetric collapse of the past and the future in the present but a creation of past and future in the achievement of a present entity.

The Microgenetic Theory of the Moment

Microgenesis refers to the concept of the mental state as a dynamic traversal—becoming—over distributed segments or growth planes in the evolution of the forebrain. The traversal is a continuum of whole-to-part shifts leading from incipient phases of potential to a final phase of actuality. The actual is achieved as a cyclical derivation in which each mental state, that is, the full microgenetic sequence, displaces a preceding state that is already in decay, as the developing state unfolds over the residual activity. The state is like a fountain through which novel form pours out from a subconscious core to a perceptual surface of world objects; like a fountain, the arising of the present state issues out of the waves of a preceding state that is receding in decay.

The process of becoming is conceived as a type of traveling wave that sweeps from depth (arising) to surface (perishing) in an obligatory direction. The depth corresponds with the archaic in evolution and the experiential history of the organism in long-term memory, the surface with systems of evolutionary recency and the immediacy of short-term memory and perception. The sweep is from the past to the present with every traversal depositing a novel occasion. The mental state is framed by an arising and a perishing, but each phase in the state arises in the fading of the same phase in the just prior state as it is revived in the next traversal.[16]

Mental states are atomic units that are replaced by near replicates. Each replicate changes slightly from the prior state in the course of its becoming. In Buddhist thought, moments are continuous and recurrent. Murti writes, "change is the replacement of one entity by another; it is the cessation of one and the emergence of another."[17] In microgenesis there is a fading of activity, and an arising on this fading of a new pattern of activity. One enjoins, transforms, and replaces the other. The phase perishes in the sense that it no longer plays its role in the prior state, but it is not extinguished. The perishing has a role to play; the phase survives, degraded, as a baseline for the next traversal.

Change

The becoming of a mental state is a sequence of nascent/cessant phases, with respect to both the wavelike pattern of the occurrent state and the background activity of the prior state. The perishing of the just-prior state is the fading background on which the arising of the present state develops. The neural activity at each phase in the decay of the preceding state is reactivated in the occurrent one. At each of these phases, a novel configuration develops out of the decay pattern. The synaptic relations among the myriad neurons that constitute this pattern act as a template for the ensuing configuration. In so doing, even as it decays, the pattern conforms (constrains) this configuration to replicate closely the equivalent phase of the just-prior state.

Change is the transition from arising *to* a perishing and the replacement of replicates, not the nexus between them. It is the configural deviation of a replicate—a

point-instant or a mental state—from the pattern of its precedent a moment before. There is no awareness of change, only a changed awareness; change lays down the awareness in a state that has also changed. That is, the change of which we are aware, the flow of objects around us, is not the change that generates the awareness, which depends on a comparison of states. This comparison is ingredient in the content of the changed state (of consciousness); it is not a contrast across successive states. The self and its objects in the present are not compared with those of a moment ago. The contrast is anchored in a duration that arises as a *virtual span across phases in a single state*. The mind does not suspend a past state for comparison with a present state. The past state is past; it no longer exists. Rather, past and present are recreated within the state of the moment with the events compared serving as boundaries *within* the momentary state, framing a duration that is extracted from a surface depth disparity across phases.

The replacement of one state by the next is transposed by consciousness to an external connection of cause and effect. A substitution is apprehended as a linkage. Bergson wrote of this as a spatialization of time. A point that replaces itself is spatially extended as a two-dimensional line. The nonspatial point is visualized as a chainlike concatenation of states linked together by causal forces. From the standpoint of the mental state as an atomic whole, the linkage is an unreal void "filled-in" by the changeless, timeless gaps between moments. Simple object causation is the filling in of the illusion of a linkage. The glue of passage is the absence of time (change) in these gaps. A fluidity of experience is achieved because the moments have no intervals. The intervals "between the moments" do not exist because they are timeless. Each moment is an entire existence for the observer.

Arising and Perishing

In Buddhist theory, a perishing gives way to an arising, which gives way to a perishing. Does the transition from a perishing to the next arising differ from the transition from an arising to the next perishing? Is the cessant phase of one moment the nascent phase of the next? If so, whence comes the autonomy of the moment? If change is a continuum of relations, how are moments articulated; that is, on what basis is the flux of the world segmented into nascent/cessant points? No matter how sufficient the width of a given point-instant, its relations will still be transected to give the point, and the boundaries of the point will be arbitrary.

Is the difference between a nascent and a cessant phase that of the direction of process? That is, would an arising become a perishing if the direction of time was reversed? In microgenesis, there is a nesting of arising/perishing phases within the mental state, from the initial phase of arising, that is, the onset of the mental state, to the terminal phase of perishing, that is, the actual endpoint of the state. The arising arises from a baseline activity that itself arises from the oscillatory properties of neurons. The process goes from arising to perishing and is irreversible. There is an arising at the initial phase of a becoming, and an arising at each successive phase, but a perishing always provides a basis for another arising; that is, a perishing is the basis for both the ensuing phase and the recurrent phase.

Buddhist theory appears unaltered by isotropic time. There is no reason why the process could not run backwards. In microgenetic theory, a perishing could not be an arising in a reversal of time. Change is in the direction of an arising *to* a perishing at each phase in the mental state, and from the onset of the state to its terminus. Process is organic and unidirectional. Nor is there a time symmetry in process metaphysics, in which perishing achieves an objective immortality in the eternal ground out of which the next actuality develops.

Constraints and Continuity

The wavelike process that is the vehicle by which the mental state is laid down is not a collection or composition of elements but a distribution into entities, a graded "materialization"—a becoming real or actual—of temporal facts out of a nontemporal ground. The facts, the phenomenal objects of world and mind, are the distal specifications of earlier holistic phases. Within each mental state, the whole-to-part transformation is iterated—one should say sustained, since it is a continuum—at successive phases through a cascade of transitions leading to the final actuality.

The mental state incorporates a sequence of phases from potential to actual. The phase of potential is an incipient object, in fact many possible objects. The potential is a proclivity or a disposition, not a multiplicity. The tendency is from unity to multiplicity, not the reverse. The final object is the realization of that potential into diverse actual entities. What entities individuate depends on the intrinsic dynamic, but mostly on the sensory delimitation of the wavelike sequence of whole/part shifts. The brain does not provide a structure on which this process unfolds. The brain is a process through which acts and objects actualize. It is only phenomenally an object. This process deposits an actual object as a final fact of experience. The final phase can deposit the object world, or an interior world of dream, or an image that is embedded in the object world. The objects of perception, dreams, and the concepts and images of introspection are all mental objects. These objects and the phases through which they are deposited constitute the mind/brain state.

The ground of the state, the resting activity of the basal phase, provides a context within which the state develops. Microgenetic states overlap. The replacement begins before the state actualizes. If the overlap were taken to the level of the point-instant, the corresponding concept in Buddhism might be the arising of a subsequent moment from the nascent phase of the preceding moment; that is, before the perishing is completed, the next arising begins. The contribution of a T-1 phase in the decay of the prior mental state to the pattern at the same phase in the occurrent state at T-2 is similar to the effect of the terminus of one nascent/cessant moment on the next arising. Through the overlap at each phase, a configuration replaces its antecedent and in turn provides a constraint on the state to follow. The influence acts at every phase in the generation of the state. A state is not activated by its antecedent.

The antecedent does not provide the raw material for the consequent. Rather, the resting state establishes the boundaries of development and so limits the striving of process for the completion and fulfillment of those entities that are but dimly forecast in the phase of potential.

The state develops as a set of contrasts at successive phases. It is parsed by extrinsic sensory or physical "input," and by the resting background of the antecedent phase. The becoming is propelled by the forward development and the pattern of intrinsic decay and sculpted at successive phases by the occurrent sensory field. Each phase in the occurrent state is driven by constraints, not direct causal effects. If a stone falls on the surface of a tranquil pool and causes a ripple of concentric waves, in what sense does the quiescent surface contribute, as a *cause,* to the pattern of the spread? If another stone falls, in what sense does the prior configuration *cause* the ensuing one? This problem is akin to that in microgeny.

A constraint is more like a condition than a cause. A constraint does not transfer something. A condition is necessary for an effect but is uncommitted as to the nature of this necessity. The concept of constraints as conditions that determine effects but do not go into them is consistent with certain schools of Buddhism. In this respect, the theory resonates with the distinction by Nāgārjuna, anticipating Hume, of conditions and causes, and the explanatory preference for the former because, as he writes: "The essence of entities is not evident in the conditions."[18]

The present state emerges out of its precursor. The foundational phases of the state evoke, in their development, ancestral phases associated with personal memory and world knowledge, and revive the past of the individual at every phase. This past constitutes the greater part of every cognition. Indeed, the inheritance of the past—the personal past, the life history—shapes the present at every moment. A perception is a memory redefined by sensation. Memory elaborates, sensation eliminates, all but what is relevant to the immediate surround. A microgeny specifies the world to a point where what actualizes is apprehended as external. An actuality is a memory, a dream, shaped by sensation to a space that is apprehended as real and extrapersonal. Conversely, a perception is a memory that escapes reminiscence by actualizing at a more distal phase in the microgeny.

Mere continuity or contiguity does not give a past. It does not give a duration or the recognition of an identity. A thermostat does not remember the past. The past exists for the thermostat, or for any reflex creature, as a changed present with no present other than the change. The imaginary present (ours, not the thermostat's, which has no present) has appropriated the past, but this is a past that exists in the mind of an organism that is capable of generating a present, not the past (the before) of a system in which duration does not exist. A present is created by a mind. The point-instant cannot exist, as a *present* point, without an observer to be present *for.*

Buddhism postulates the moment, microgenesis the mental state, as the fundamental unit of experience. Each mental state is an encapsulated moment. In the autonomy of the state, the theory approaches the Buddhist concept of momentariness. The moment is a relation of phases that are internally continuous, but discontinuous with antecedent moments. Microgenesis gives an account of the origin of the moment as the basic unit of cognition. The process is similarly relational; the moment is equally discrete. There is an important difference, however. The summing of points to events is postulated in Buddhism to be an activity of the mind, while for microgenesis wholes are not constructed but partitioned. The moments of microgenesis are durations in which instants are artificial slices. The moments of Buddhist thought are irreducible points. Duration in microgenesis is computed from a disparity in phases; the phenomenal moment in Buddhism is a complex thought-construction of atomic point-instants. In Buddhism, points are constructed to phenomenal experience whereas in microgenesis they are the analytic termini of phenomenal wholes.

The mental state exhibits the same types of relations that govern the dependent co-origination of points. The moment is equivalent to the mental state, as the part is illustrative of the whole. The point-instant of Buddhist thought has also been related to the mental state. P. Mehta wrote, "the steps of the paṭicca-samuppāda . . . apply in relation to each and every experience, and especially to each and every mental state."[19] The mental state develops on the same basis as the point-instant. Relational dependence is universally applicable.

Like Indra's Net, holographic representation and fractal self-similarity, each point-instant is a microcosm of a phase in becoming, and each phase in becoming is a microcosm of the mental state. The points do not exist individually, nor do the phases, without a transition over the series. The state must actualize to become real, so its phases can also become real. As there is no arising without a perishing, there is no arising/perishing without another arising/perishing, so that any phase in the continuum depends on those phases in which it is embedded. The principle is the same in Buddhism and microgenesis.

Categorization and Momentariness

Stcherbatsky wrote that the leading idea of Buddhism, the keystone of its ontology, is that there is no other ultimate reality than separate, instantaneous bits of existence, with all stabilities constructed by the imagination. These thought-constructions of phenomenal experience obscure our vision of this underlying reality. For Nāgārjuna, the phenomenal world is as real or unreal as a point, and both are as real as any world can be. The relational dependence of events is true for any and every world. There is no substance, no foundational element; the points are recombined by secondary relations in the mind. But is not the very concept of the point-instant and its atomicity mind-dependent?

The mind-dependence develops on the concept of atomicity, which requires a stability of process. Pure flux is not atomic. Atomicity is a break in flux. Buddhist theory is at pains to account for the autonomy of successive occasions. How is flux resolved with stability even at the level of the point? Is the relativity of the point compatible with its replication? If there is no explanation for how the flux is carved up, there is no account of novelty, identity, randomness, chaos.

The novelty of an occasion is in the relation of all points at a given moment that impact on that occasion. Is the "sum" of all relations for each recurrence the sum of

their causal bonds? The interpenetration of points by other points—whether simultaneous or temporally displaced—is consistent with either rigid causation or continuous novelty. For some, the conditionality of dependence is a restriction on causal certainty. For others, the dependence is fully deterministic. The kinetic nature of the bonds within and between events implies that the emptiness of relationality could be the emptiness of contingency. The unconditioned is the ground of contingent entities. But if the relational is the contingent, its emptiness is not its contingency; it is its transitivity.

Change is in the relational quality of the points; stability is in their capacity for replication. A constellation of moments that replicates itself with some consistency is perceived as an object. If replications are not exact facsimiles, they change. If they are exact facsimiles, they do not change. For microgenesis, change is the replacement by a *near* replicate. Consciousness and duration are created by the process of replacement; it is not consciousness that does the recombining. Indeed, in Buddhism, there is too much work for consciousness to do without some explanation of how the work is done. A theory of replacement is obligated to describe the change in the replicate; otherwise, the world is a static block. Perhaps for Buddhism it is, but then how and why does the illusion of change occur?

Process and stability are the problem of change and duration. The phenomenal present, the specious present of William James, is an illusion that develops in a single mental state.[20] The past event that is the hinter border of the duration no longer exists, nor do the intervening events, nor does the present event, the perception that is the forward edge of the duration. The external referent of a memory is gone, as is the referent of the perception by the time the observer perceives it. A perceived object is not "on-line" with the perception. The perceptual event is a creation "out of time" with respect to the external world, possibly with respect to the brain as well.

The world is the derivation of the conceptual into objects. Concepts are categories. The process of categorization is a primordial mental operation, a Kantian given, through which nature is articulated. The denial of categories in Mādhyamika—or the attempt to eliminate, through right action and meditation, the attachment to concepts or categories of thought—aims to strip off all thought-based illusions that obscure a knowledge of the real. Whether this is even possible is questionable, but the effort is justified by the categorical nature of all knowledge. It is likely that many of the categories of human knowledge approximate those of nature or tease her apart at her joints—otherwise we would not be here—but the categories are still mental. A moment or point-instant is a category, an isolate in the mind that takes on a contrast as a momentary focus. The emptiness of *pratītyasamutpāda* might be the pure flux that remains when the *concept* even of the point-instant dissolves. But then, the point-instant itself would disappear.

The stability of objects depends on a duration, which in turn hinges on the process of categorization. The process of category production is linked to the whole-part relation. The derivation of parts from wholes and the graded succession of whole-part shifts establish the pattern of mental process. The parts of a whole impend in the whole as the members of a category impend in the category. The whole is not a settled capacity but a potential for an arising of its parts. The parts are not actual items or constituents but virtual entities. There are no conclusive parts or wholes. A part that is generated can become a whole and perish for the sake of another partition. The final wholelike parts are what process deposits as the actual world.

Wholes and parts are relations. The relation of whole to part resembles the shifting contrasts and hierarchies of categories and members. This relation is fundamental to the experience of all mental and perceptual content. The shift from whole to part is the vehicle of change. The recrudescence of antecedent wholes that distribute into parts recaptures the context (concepts) from which the parts (objects) individuate. The view of mental process as the fractioning of wholes into parts—the final partlike wholes being the entities that process achieves, with every part emerging from an antecedent whole—corresponds with a basic theme in Indian philosophy, that unity underlies diversity, for example in the concept of causation as an emergence of event-particulars out of a causal whole, or in the concept of a universal self or absolute nature that underlies the transient self and the phenomenal world. Mehta has written, "from the many to the One; from the diversity so obvious to the senses, to the unity which is the fruit of inward realization: such is the general trend in religious thought."[21] In microgenesis, this process is reversed. The specification of parts out of wholes is conceived as unidirectional, anisotropic, like the experience of time, which is a subjective feeling that supervenes on the whole-part relation.

To say that a moment is a category implies that a moment in consciousness is a chunking by the mind of the stream of change. In fact, the *appearance of a stream* is elaborated by the moments. There are no *present* moments in nonconscious nature, yet there is momentary change. There are entities, there is change, and, presumably, there is becoming, but there is no actual present. A moment in nature is not a now. In transforming moments to nows, mind exemplifies the becoming of nature. The change in a mental entity from its antecedents—the dissipation of an entity and its replacement by another novelty, the arrow of time that flies over the points as they are vanishing, the birth, growth, and death of each moment—is the cognitive equivalent of the change that underlies passage in the material world. The momentary cycle of a point-instant, its arising and perishing, does not require consciousness for the *expansion* of that momentariness to a present moment. The present develops in a complex of nascent/cessant cycles within which the point-instant is conceptualized. All moments are not present moments independent of consciousness. If a point-instant were to be regarded as a present moment, one would have to postulate a consciousness ingredient in every entity no matter how particulate.

Notes

1 – For a discussion of microgenetic theory in relation to Whiteheadian process philosophy, see Jason W. Brown, "Foundations of Cognitive Metaphysics," in *Process Studies* (1998) 27: 79–92.

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2 – For clinical material, see Jason W. Brown, *Life of the Mind: Selected Papers* (Hillsdale, New Jersey: Erlbaum Associates, 1988); for theory, see idem, *Self and Process: Brain States and the Conscious Present* (New York: Springer-Verlag, 1991), and *Time, Will, and Mental Process* (New York: Plenum Press, 1996).

3 – Satkari Mookerjee, *The Buddhist Philosophy of Universal Flux: An Exposition of the Philosophy of Critical Realism as Expounded by the School of Dignāga* (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1935).

4 – The conjunction of successive moments through contiguity, causal efficacy, the persistence of the cause in the effect, the "thickness" of the elements, the properties of onset and offset—existence/nonexistence couplets—identity across instants, causation, and so on are topics that have been extensively debated and will not be discussed at length in this article.

5 – Th. Stcherbatsky, *The Central Conception of Buddhism and the Meaning of the Word "Dharma"* (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1923).

6 – T. R. V. Murti, *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism: A Study of the Mādhyamika System* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1955), p. 71.

7 – For example, in David Kalupahana, *Causality: The Central Philosophy of Buddhism* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1975). And, elsewhere, the problem with "identifying consciousness with the passing psychical states (is that in the absence of a distinct mental entity behind the states) consciousness has been reduced to a congeries of momentary conscious units having no real nexus between" (Mookerjee, *The Buddhist Philosophy of Universal Flux*, p. 342).

8 – See the discussion in Jay L. Garfield, trans. and comment., *The Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way: Nāgārjuna's Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

9 – Candrakīrti writes that when a cognition is manifest from a potential then there is a "dependence on a reciprocal object" that in virtue of the dependence does not exist. The critique of before and after, and the nonexistence of dependency, has less force if the events are conceived as successive phases in becoming, since the nontemporality of becoming dissolves the problems of priority and relational dependency.

10 – The insistence that emptiness is viewless because it is a lifepath that excludes or transcends all other views, though resonant with the earliest concepts of Mādhyamika, has the unfortunate effect of restricting discourse to exegesis when there is much in Buddhist philosophy that could profitably be applied to scientific thinking. In this respect, I find myself closer in spirit to Murti than to his many critics. See C. W. Huntington, Jr., with Geshé Namgyal Wangchen, *The Emptiness of Emptiness: An Introduction to Early Indian Mādhyamika* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1989).

11 – Estimated at 10^{-24} seconds by G. J. Whitrow, in his *The Natural Philosophy of Time* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1961).

12 – K. V. Ramanan, *Nāgārjuna's Philosophy* (Rutland, Vermont: Charles Tuttle, 1966).

13 – Th. Stcherbatsky, *Buddhist Logic*, vol. 1. (1930; reprint, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1993), p. 84 et seq.

14 – Charles Hartshorne, "Whitehead's Differences from Buddhism," *Philosophy East and West* 25 (4) (October 1975): 407–426.

15 – See Steve Odin, *Process Metaphysics and Hua-Yen Buddhism: A Critical Study of Cumulative Penetration vs. Interpenetration* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1982).

16 – The term *state* is unfelicitous for it implies a static block or slice of time. It is used to describe the full set of kinetic phases in the dynamic "module" of a becoming sequence. The term *phase* refers to a transitional segment in a given state.

17 – Murti, *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism*, p. 73.

18 – See Jay L. Garfield, "Dependent Arising and the Emptiness of Emptiness: Why Did Nāgārjuna Start with Causation?" *Philosophy East and West* 44 (2) (April 1994): 219–250.

19 – Phirozshah Mehta, *Early Indian Religious Thought* (London: Luzac and Co., 1956), p. 230.

20 – A theory of how duration arises in the mental state, and the relation of the duration of the present to the stability of mental entities and external objects, has been discussed in previous books (see Brown, *Self and Process* and *Time, Will, and Mental Process*).

21 – Mehta, *Early Indian Religious Thought*, p. 347.

the superiority of Chinese thought with Heidegger's assertion, discussed in the previous section, that Western tradition cannot achieve any transformation by taking over "Eastern experiences."

54 – This rhetoric of East and West does not confine itself to Hegel's discourse. In the Introduction to his book *China and Europe,* for example, Adolf Reichwein cites the following words by Nathorp: "Today the expiring occidental turns his face back to the rising-place of the spiritual sun, the true birthplace of Man and of all his profound dreams of God and the soul—to the East." And these words find their echo in the East: "Tagore spoke: 'For if this brand consume itself and be extinguished, leaving a heap of ashes as its only memorial, the everlasting light will once more shine forth in the East—in the East where human history had its dawn'" (Adolf Reichwein, *China and Europe: Intellectual and Artistic Contacts in the Eighteenth Century,* trans. J. C. Powell [London: Kegan Paul, 1925], p. 3).

55 – This is the meaning of the concept of '*zhong* / the middle' in the *Zhong Yong* (Doctrine of the mean), as it is interpreted by some modern Neo-Confucianists. See, for example, Hu Weixi, *Chuantong yu renwen: Dui gongtai xin rujia de kaocha* (Tradition and humanity: An examination of the Neo-Confucianists in Hong Kong and Taiwan) (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1992), pp. 52 ff. The thought of *zhong* may be cautiously compared with what Geoffrey Bennington says of deconstruction: it "is not an extremism," and we "must seek out ... the 'differential' tension of the *middle*" (Geoffrey Bennington and Jacques Derrida, *Jacques Derrida,* trans. Geoffrey Bennington [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993], p. 171).

PROBLEMS OF RELIGIOUS PLURALISM: A ZEN CRITIQUE OF JOHN HICK'S ONTOLOGICAL MONOMORPHISM

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John Hick has recently advanced a "pluralistic hypothesis"[1] of religion that essays a comprehensive vision of religious diversity and its attendant soteriological, epistemological, and ontological implications. At the heart of his theory is the hypothesis that there is a transcendent noumenal reality, ontologically "real" and epistemically unknowable, that is the ultimate metaphysical referent for the various phenomenal responses, culturally and humanly conditioned, of diverse religious traditions:

> [T]he great world faiths embody different perceptions and conceptions of, and correspondingly different responses to, the Real from within the major variant ways of being human.... One then sees the great world religions as different human responses to the one divine Reality, embodying different perceptions which have been formed in different historical and cultural circumstances.[2]

In addition to the transcendental unity of all religions, Hick suggests that there is a substantial identity of soteriological mechanisms at work:

> [W]ithin each of them ["the great world faiths"] the transformation of human existence from self-centeredness to Reality-centeredness is taking place. These traditions are accordingly to be regarded as alternative soteriological "spaces" within which, or "ways" along which, men and women can find salvation/liberation/ultimate fulfilment.[3]

Methodologically, Hick weaves what, on first blush, seem to be diametrically opposed philosophical threads, namely: (1) a neo-Wittgensteinian approach that construes religious beliefs and practices as part of a "language-game," or "the language and the actions into which it is woven,"[4] and (2) a propositional-realist, though highly perspectivist, purview by positing an ontologically real transcendent. These seemingly contradictory views, however, contribute to a richly textured account of religious experience that incorporates the diversity of religious faiths and grounds the traditions in a cohesive metaphysical substratum.[5]

However, some critics have questioned the philosophical validity of Hick's metaphysical and epistemological presuppositions, specifically his formulation of the Real *an sich* and the Real as humanly experienced. For example, Harold A. Netland asks:

> If our experience is limited to the divine phenomena, can we be said to have any knowledge at all of the divine noumenon—the Eternal One? If there is no significant element of continuity between the Eternal One *an sich* and the various divine *personae,* is it at all informative to speak of the *personae* as images or manifestations of the Eternal One?[6]

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Above and beyond the internal logistics of Hick's metaphysics,[7] there seems to be another question concerning the commensurability of Hick's schema with religious traditions that do not refer to an ultimate ontological reality (i.e., "that putative reality which transcends everything other than itself but is not transcended by anything other than itself"[8]). As Sumner B. Twiss suggests, "a recognition of the possible ill fittingness between Hick's claim and some religious traditions suggests the possibility that his claim might well be theistically loaded and at best applicable only to those theistic traditions that are historically related (e.g., Judaism, Christianity, Islam)."[9]

These questions point to a possible incongruity between Hick's approach and the various faiths that do not claim any sort of metaphysical or ontological appreciation of a divine noumenal reality. It will be my contention throughout the rest of this essay that Sōtō Zen Buddhism, as represented by the medieval Zen master Dōgen,[10] necessarily vitiates Hick's thesis on two major counts and one minor one. They can be formulated as follows:

1. There is no reference to a metaphysical reality above and beyond the phenomenal; indeed, the soteriological force of Sōtō Zen is secured not by an experience of the noumenal, either transcendently or immanently, but by a thoroughgoing acceptance and appreciation of the phenomenal.
2. Moreover, Zennists, especially Dōgen, stipulate that unless one is stripped of his/her conceptual, linguistic fetters, he/she cannot have an epistemic awareness of the "true" nature of reality.
3. Hick's soteriological model of liberation as the "transformation from self-centeredness to Reality-centeredness," while structurally consonant with Zen soteriology, lacks the additional component of compassionate activity espoused by Dōgen and many other Zen masters; in effect, Dōgen takes Hick's model one step further by augmenting a practical component that can only be "actualized" in constant "exertion."[11]

Supervening on these critiques will be a positive construction of Dōgen's religious enterprise[12] and its implications for the connection between religious experience, namely the "oneness of practice and enlightenment" *(shushō ittō)*, and moral action.

I

For Hick's thesis to have any sort of validity, that it not be a Feuerbachian projection or a Freudian illusion, it must posit "a real encounter [with] the Ultimate Reality"[13] as *personae* or *impersonae*. It is of internal realism[14] that lacks any ontological force. Indeed, Hick maintains that such a noncognitivistic view of religion

> cuts the heart out of religious belief and practice. For the importance of religious beliefs to the believer lies ultimately in the assumption that they are substantially true references to the nature of reality; and the importance of religious practices to the practitioner lies in the assumption that through them one is renewing or deepening one's relationship to the transcendent divine Reality.[15]

Hence, all religious experience, culturally conditioned and institutionally shaped, refers to the same ultimate reality, or Real *an sich*.

I am not so concerned here with the pluralist aspect of Hick's agenda (i.e., whether it is valid to posit the same unifying transcendent for the various conceptions of the divine in differing faiths); rather, I would like to consider the more fundamental question of the commensurability of such a model to a tradition that professes no metaphysical claims of the kind advanced by Hick. Hence, my inquiry is more concerned with whether Hick's hypothesis can function as a *general* theory of religious experience, able to accommodate even those traditions that do not give credence to a metaphysically discrete divine reality.

On this question, I think it may be illuminating to draw a methodological distinction that may help to locate Hick's insights or oversights. I am referring to descriptive and explanatory reductionism:

> *Descriptive reduction* is the failure to identify an emotion, practice, or experience under the description by which the subject identifies it. This is indeed unacceptable. To describe an experience in nonreligious terms when the subject himself describes it in religious terms is to misidentify the experience, or to attend to another experience altogether.
>
> *Explanatory reduction* consists in offering an explanation of an experience in terms that are not those of the subject and that might not meet with his approval. This is perfectly justifiable and is, in fact, normal procedure.... The explanation stands or falls according to how well it can account for all the available evidence.[16]

The charge of descriptive reductionism has been leveled at Hick by various critics[17] for "reducing" religious claims to second-order interpretations that contradict the fundamental premises of differing faiths. However, it seems to me that Hick goes out of his way to give valid, internal descriptions of religious faiths and even goes so far as to remain "agnostic" about settling, in any satisfactory way, the differences between the various truth claims raised by each tradition over historical and metaphysical matters. Indeed, it is precisely the identification and exposition of the self-understandings of religious traditions that begat the problem of religious diversity in the first place.[18] Hence, a critique of

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Hick would seem to hinge on the explanatory force, and not on the descriptive adequacy, of his hypotheses.

In characterizing the Zen tradition, Hick gives the following description: "From the point of view of our pluralistic hypothesis we can say that for Zen the Real is immanent in the world process and can be experienced in each present moment of existence by a mind purified of the ego point of view."[19] Although, at times, Hick seems to move away from a metaphysical reading of a Real *an sich,* albeit as an immanental and not a transcendental manifestation, within the Buddhist tradition,[20] he inevitably capitulates to a Kantian notion of a "single divine noumenon," or the "Eternal One," as the foundational ground of Buddhist experience:

> It appears to me that the doctrine of *anicca,* in its extended form, affirming that the universe is an endless continuum of change, without beginning or end, must be a theory rather than a report of experience.... That everything we observe is transient can safely be affirmed; but the evidence on which this is affirmed cannot authorise the further claim that there is no eternal reality transcending the realm of temporal change.[21]

In light of this exegesis, we may question whether Hick's interpretation has any justificatory force as an explanation of the Buddhist, specifically Zen, tradition in regard to matters metaphysical.

Dōgen, the founder of the Sōtō Zen sect[22] in Japan, regarded emptiness or impermanence as the organizing principle of all phenomena. He states in the *Busshō:*

> [P]lants, trees, and woods are impermanent, hence Buddha-nature. Human bodies and minds are transient, thus Buddha-nature. Countries, mountains, and rivers are evanescent, because they are Buddha-nature. Since supreme enlightenment is Buddha-nature, it is impermanent. The perfect quietude of nirvana is momentary and thereby Buddha-nature.[23]

For Dōgen, impermanence is not so much a discrete, metaphysically real ground of human experience as it is a phenomenological law governing the dispositional states of all psychophysical operations at work in the experiential world. Indeed, even the ultimate soteriological state of nirvāṇa cannot be said to be free from the continuous flux of change and decay: "Awakening to the Bodhi-mind and realizing enlightenment are both subject to momentary birth and decay.... Simply understand that birth and death are in themselves Nirvana."[24] Ultimately, the "emptiness of 'emptiness is emptiness'" means that in the realization of emptiness there is "nothing but emptiness."[25]

When Dōgen states that all things are impermanent, he is not simply stating that some form of "change" exists as a "higher" immutable reality "out there" to be grasped; rather, he seems to be suggesting that impermanence, as a determinative, constituent factor of all phenomena, is occurrent prior to its objectification. He states in the *Ikka myōju:* "Because of its priority over its functional manifestations, this principle remains as something ungraspable even in the midst of its functioning."[26] In other words, impermanence, by its very definition, is impossible to experience externally but is rather an internal phenomenological condition of the experience itself. Hence, instead of "All sentient beings possess Buddha-nature without exception," Dōgen contends that "All existence is Buddha-nature."[27] In this way, Dōgen denies that impermanence can be experienced as a something, not because of any sort of metaphysical gap (e.g., between the Real *an sich* and the Real as humanly experienced), but rather because of its non-abiding ontological reality. Joan Stambaugh, in a recent study of Dōgen's views on impermanence, puts the matter thus:

> The Buddha-nature is not the kind of thing that we can possess at all. Viewed temporally, this means that the Buddha-nature is not something that admits of being possessed in the mode of durational persistence. It does not persist; it has no duration.... The Buddha-nature is precisely temporal conditions themselves. By temporal conditions, Dōgen is referring to the question of how something occurs, happens, takes place.[28]

In contradistinction, from Hick's point of view, the Real *an sich* manifest in the Zen experience is, in fact,

> the source both of our existence and the value or meaning of that existence.... To affirm the goodness of the universe ... is to affirm an ultimate reality transcending the flux of change and chance, a reality which is in its relation to us to be rejoiced in. And in the Buddhist tradition this eternal reality is variously known as *nirvana,* the *dharmakaya, sunyata.*[29]

However, it is dubious whether one could categorize emptiness as a "source," or even more precariously as "an ultimate reality transcending the flux of change and chance," since it seems eminently clear that impermanence is metaphysically non-referential. As Thomas Kasulis contends:

> [I]t is futile to seek a permanently unchanging object, whether it be God, soul, *atman,* or an essence that distinguishes one from everybody else.... In other words, when projecting our experience of change onto some external noumenon, we falsely assume the experiencing self to be unchanging; but when we take the experience of change *as it is* and make no projections beyond what is directly given, there is simply the unending experience of flux.[30]

In other words, Zen does not point to a metaphysically ultimate ground as the referent of phenomenal experience; it does not mediate "real contact with a higher reality." In fact, the soteriological end of Buddhism, in general, seems more to be preoccupied with dissolving "ignorance"

than experiencing an "absolute": "It is the preoccupying concern of Buddhism to 'resolve' the problems of suffering and death by showing them to be problems caused by misunderstanding and ignorance of the true character of reality."[31]

These conclusions lead one to question whether Hick's interpretation is warranted based on the textual sources and whether his explanations possess any hermeneutical force in regard to their logical coherency. It seems prima facie evident that Hick's model seems misplaced at least in relation to the Zen tradition. Again, the ill fittingness of Hick's claim seems to suggest, at least inferentially, that there might be a theistic bias at work.[32]

Perhaps the suspicion of a theistic orientation could be further fleshed out by considering in detail Hick's tolerant agnosticism concerning conflicting truth claims of different religious traditions. In a nutshell, Hick contends that differences between historical, transhistorical, and ultimate beliefs advanced by religious faiths are at present inconclusive as relates to their truth value;[33] however, as Hick suggests, "such theories and mythologies are not however necessary for salvation/liberation.... They are less than ultimately important."[34] This is fully consonant with what David Putney sees as the primary "soteriological intention" in the work of Dōgen: "If any teaching became an obstacle to realization, Dōgen, like many of his Buddhist predecessors, did not hesitate to abandon it.... The masters of the Zen tradition were very much aware that their teachings, or 'words and letters,' could themselves become obstacles, and thus the term *kattō* (Chin. *ke-tung*), or the metaphor of attachment as a tangle of vines."[35] Compare Hick:

> It could be that the universe, like a modern spy operation, is conducted on a "need to know" basis and that what, religiously, we need to know is soteriological rather than metaphysical. If so, the metaphysical differences between the different religious traditions, responding in their distinctively different ways to the various unanswered and unanswerable questions, will not affect the all important matter of salvation/liberation.[36]

Hence, Hick proposes a pragmatic approach to grading religious systems as a function of their soteriological efficacy. To this end, he suggests that "the transformations of human existence which the different major visions produce appear, as we see them described in their scriptures and embodied in the lives of the saints, to be equally radical in their nature and equally impressive in their outcomes."[37] As such, since the major religious traditions can be said to be equally effective in their soteriological methods and thereby inscribe equally valid impressions of the Real, the "pluralist hypothesis" would seem to be justified on pragmatic grounds. However, it must be asked whether Hick actually relegates claims of a metaphysical order to ancillary roles; or, perhaps, could

he be conflating the pragmatic with the metaphysical in his criteria of soteriological efficacy?

As was illustrated above, Hick seems to intimate more than just a tinge of a theistic bias in his theoretical orientation. Furthermore, if we are to take his avowed claims as logically coherent and hermeneutically efficacious, it is incumbent on his theory to accommodate a general reading of the major religious traditions. Specifically, can his schema tolerate a tradition (i.e., Sōtō Zen) that does not posit a metaphysical Real into its soteriological equation? I will contend that in fleshing out the implications of Hick's pragmatic justificatory scheme, the theistic orientation that colored his metaphysical reading of the Buddhist tradition is also at work in his soteriological model.

By way of analogy, I would like to invoke William James' anecdote of an "automatic sweetheart" to illuminate Hick's position. I will quote at length here due to what I see as the homologous nature of the logical fallacy that impinges upon both James' aside and Hick's hypothesis:

> I see here a chance to forestall a criticism which some one may make on Lecture III of my *Pragmatism*, where ... I said that "God" and "Matter" might be regarded as synonymous terms, so long as no differing future consequences were deducible from the two conceptions.... I had no sooner given the address than I perceived a flaw in that part of it.... The flaw was evident when, as a case analogous to that of a godless universe, I thought of what I called an "automatic sweetheart," meaning a soulless body which should be absolutely indistinguishable from a spiritually animated maiden, laughing, talking,... performing all feminine offices as tactfully and sweetly as if a soul were in her. Would anyone regard her as a full equivalent? Certainly not, and why? Because, framed as we are, our egoism craves above all things inward sympathy and recognition, love and admiration. The outward treatment is valued mainly as an expression, as a manifestation of the accompanying consciousness believed in. Pragmatically, then, belief in the automatic sweetheart would not *work*, and in point of fact no one treats it as a serious hypothesis. The godless universe would be exactly similar. Even if matter could do every outward thing that God does, the idea of it would not work as satisfactorily, because the chief call for a God on modern men's part is for a being who will inwardly recognize them and judge them sympathetically. Matter disappoints this craving of our ego, so God remains for most men the truer hypothesis, and indeed remains so for definite pragmatic reasons.[38]

In the footnote by James above, the metaphysical questions of matter and God are discussed by way of an analogous case in which the two conceptions are discerned according to their respective functions. James contends that owing to the "craving of our ego" men recognize the conception of God, as opposed to matter, to be the "truer hypothesis." This is the case due to the following reasons: first, the "chief call" for a God is to "inwardly recognize" and judge "sympathetically" the *entia* of

men; secondly, since matter, even if it could satisfactorily comply with "every outward thing that God does," is lacking in regard to inward attributes (e.g., sympathy and love), it cannot fulfill this "craving" of the ego; thus, the idea of matter would not "work" as pragmatically as the idea of God. Recognizing the fact that the passage above is merely a footnote, I wish to illuminate the discrepancies and uncritical assumptions that seem to undermine James' argument and then relate my conclusions to Hick's postulate.

James attempts to discern the practicality of the belief in the notion of God through an analogous case of an "automatic sweetheart." He argues that since we cannot regard the automatic sweetheart, though "indistinguishable" from a spiritually animated maiden, as equivalent to its more vivacious counterpart, we cannot regard a godless universe as equivalent to a universe in which God is extant. The reasoning in both cases rests on what James calls the "craving of the ego" for inward recognition and sympathetic judgment. Just as a spiritually animated maiden can satisfy this internal craving, God can also fulfill this desire.

However, it seems as though it could be argued that inward recognition and sympathetic judgment could be perceived as just two more "offices" of the outward treatment of the maiden. It is one thing to say that a person, filled with compassion, does acts of charity as the expression of that compassion; that is, it would be "a manifestation of the accompanying consciousness believed in." However, to equate the existence of a soul with the qualities of inward recognition and sympathetic judgment seems, at the very least, to be a dubious proposition. And in fact if, as James states, the automatic sweetheart is "absolutely indistinguishable" from the real maiden, what would be the "cash value" in treating the two entities as unequal. When James contends that the idea of God is the "truer hypothesis," owing to its unique functions (i.e., "a being who will inwardly recognize them and judge them sympathetically"), he begs the question by assuming a God to perceive and judge when in fact this is hardly unequivocal.

Analogously, the logic that applied to James' "automatic sweetheart" could, *mutatis mutandis,* be applied in Hick's theory of the Real. If Hick is bold enough to assert that truth claims of a historical, transhistorical, and ultimate nature are tertiary to the "all-important matter of salvation/liberation" (i.e., their cash value), and if in fact the tenacity with which we cling to such beliefs may in the end be "counterproductive" to soteriological ends, then it would seem as if his insistence[39] on an ontologically ultimate Real *an sich* in the case of Zen Buddhism would either (1) falsify what would otherwise be a valid pragmatic theory of soteriological justification or (2) undermine his own tenacity, notwithstanding a sound thesis to the contrary, in holding such a theistic orientation. I would be inclined to concur with the latter judgment.

II

Hick's epistemological claims derive principally from a Kantian orientation[40] in which religious beliefs and practices are seen as "cognitive filters" that mediate an awareness of the Real. Hick further develops his epistemic model by extending Wittgenstein's notion of "seeing-as" to the whole of conscious experience as "experiencing-as."[41] Hence,

> In a continuous activity of interpretation, usually operating in unconscious and habitual ways, we form hypotheses about its character or practical meaning for us which we then test in our behavior. For the meaning of an object or a situation is its perceived (or misperceived) character as such that to perceive it as having that character is to be in a distinctive dispositional state in relation to it. We are continuously experiencing aspects of our environment as having kinds of meaning [physical, ethical, and religious] in virtue of which it is appropriate for us to behave within it in this or that way or range of ways. Thus all conscious experiencing is experiencing-as.[42]

For Hick, the Real is always encountered indirectly through the mediating channels of sociolinguistic schemes that have been culturally and institutionally conditioned. Indeed, Hick goes so far as to state that "even in the profoundest unitive mysticism the mind operates with culturally specific concepts and that what is experienced is accordingly a manifestation of the Real rather than the postulated Real *an sich.*"[43] However, does not this position seem to contradict many traditions, including Zen, that hold that reality can be intuited in an unmediated manner? I do not think that Hick's hypothesis suffers from descriptive reductionism, for clearly he sees that traditions do in fact report such experiences. Nevertheless, it seems as if Hick's theistic bias, as expressed in his partition of an ontologically divine noumenal reality as distinct from a humanly experienced phenomenal reality, spoils the explanatory force and hermeneutical adequacy of his hypothesis when considering the epistemological foundations of the Zen tradition.

The shortcomings of Hick's epistemic assumptions seem to be threefold: (1) There is an uncritical presupposition that the religious experience for the aspirant is "intentional." (2) Zen avoids Hick's dilemma by not positing an ontologically ultimate Real *an sich;* hence, there is no epistemological problem with directly intuiting the Real since the Real is only phenomenal existence. (3) Hick's hypothesis is logically incoherent in its application to Zen since the epistemic status of "undefiled" awareness is predicated as a necessary condition for the soteriological end of enlightenment. In other words, if we strictly follow Hick's postulate (i.e., that unmediated conscious experience is impossible), it would be logically insuperable for a Zen aspirant to attain enlightenment. I will delineate these arguments in turn.

Robert K. C. Forman[44] has recently argued that the experiential model that has been generating much of the literature on mysticism[45]

assumes, explicitly or implicitly, that mystical experiences are equivalent to ordinary intentional experiences; that is, the mystic encounters some "object":

> The underlying picture in all these accounts is that mysticism is rather like one's experience of a pencil, the thought of a pencil, or feelings about a pencil. One hotly defended implication of this model is the pluralism thesis: different cultures engender different experiences of the mystical object(s). Theirs is a plea for the recognition of differences.[46]

Forman goes on to note that while most of our ordinary experiences are indeed "intentional," or "vectorial," in nature, many religious traditions, to the contrary, report mental events in which all mental content is absent: "a transient phenomenon during which the subject remains conscious (wakeful, alert—not sleeping or unconscious) yet devoid of all mental content."[47] Moreover, conceptual-linguistic filters cannot be said to "construct" such an event since the very procedures that necessitate such a condition require that the subject cease using language and concepts: "If one truly forgets all concepts, beliefs, etc., for some period, then those beliefs, etc., cannot play a formative role in the etiology of the resultant conscious events."[48]

However, during this "pure consciousness event" (PCE) one is still conscious, but not of anything; it is rather consciousness per se. Thus, the subject-object dichotomy that usually obtains during a conscious experience between the perceiving subject and the perceived object is nullified, and all that remains is "awareness itself." In this sense, there is no structural discontinuity from non-object consciousness to object consciousness, only the addition of content. Forman likens this model to the example of a radar receiver:

> If consciousness is defined as the persisting awareness itself, analogous to the persisting receiver itself, then conceiving of the pure consciousness event is unproblematic. In the pure consciousness event awareness itself persists, even though unaccompanied by intentional content. It is as if the radar dish were "switched on," but no airplanes happened to fly by.[49]

In short, all mental phenomena need not possess intentional properties. Hence, instead of "There is something that S *perceives* to be *f*," it is, rather, simply, "S *perceives*."

Forman adroitly alludes to the fact that his theory is just as warranted as the constructivist model if for no other reason than the fact that both conceptions of consciousness are predicated on empirical evidence. And, as he concludes,

> No matter how many Humes, Moores, or Evanses claim that they cannot catch themselves devoid of perceptions, this tells us little about what a Sadhu, Carthusian monk, or Bhikku may or be able to do after years of practice of certain mental or physical techniques.... The empirical evidence is that sane people sometimes use the term "consciousness" to allude to an experience which differs from what we usually mean by consciousness, or allude to an experience of consciousness devoid of content. Evidence, not theories of the possible, should determine definitions.[50]

The question of pure consciousness, by its very nature, seems to be an empirically derived and contingent proposition, not the a priori, necessary proposition that some scholars (e.g., Steven Katz[51]) have deduced it to be. In other words, the veridicality of mystical states does not seem to hinge on an analytic judgment (e.g., "all bodies are extended"); rather, they seem to fall under synthetic judgments (e.g., "all bodies are heavy"). And in this sense, the burden of proof is on the philosopher to supply the empirical evidence (e.g., neuroscientific) to corroborate his/her claims. Indeed, the only sort of "evidence" that Hick supplies is a *de facto* claim that seems to beg the question. He states:

> If the history of religions had included only one tradition of unitive mysticism, offering a single and consistent report of that of which the mystics have an apparently unmediated awareness, it would have to be necessary to amend our hypothesis at this point.... However does not the fact that there are a number of different traditions of unitive mysticism, offering their characteristically different reports of the nature of the Real, make it seem more likely that the otherwise universal structure of human consciousness holds here also.... These observable facts suggest that mystics within the different traditions do not float free from their cultural conditioning.[52]

Besides the evidential paucity of Hick's epistemological claims, it seems—at least in the Zen tradition—that the "intentional model" of mystical experience can be deflated in part by illustrating the logical incoherence that inheres when an ontologically divine reality is posited. For Hick's hypothesis to be plausible, there has to be a presumption of a Real *an sich* grounding all phenomenal reality, or the affirmation of "the noumenal Real as the necessary presupposition of the religious life."[53] Without this premise, the theory would seem to be innocuous at best and irrational at worst. For if there were no Ultimate Real to mediate via cognitive filters, it would only be a short step to drawing the positive conclusion that indeed one could get at the true nature of reality through an unmediated awareness. This is precisely the maneuver that I think Dōgen is making.

In his *Fukan zazen-gi*, Dōgens states:

> You should stop pursuing words and letters and learn to withdraw and reflect on yourself.... Setting everything aside, think of neither good nor evil, right nor wrong. Thus, having stopped the various functions of your mind, give up the idea of becoming a Buddha. This holds true not only for zazen but for all your daily actions.... Think of nonthinking. How is this done? By thinking

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> beyond thinking and nonthinking. This is the very basis of zazen.... Zazen is a practice beyond the subjective and objective worlds, beyond discriminative thinking.[54]

As characterized by Dōgen, the state achieved in zazen (i.e., satori) seems to mirror the "forgetting model" alluded to earlier by Forman. Within this state, although one is still conscious (i.e., one is still "thinking" in a "nonthinking" way),[55] the fetters of discriminative thought patterns are at rest; one achieves an awareness per se. Or, as Sallie B. King states, "The mind or Buddha nature is not a thing which perceives, but the act of perceiving itself."[56] The Zen adept's mental state can be properly described as intentionless (i.e., no object is attended to consciously). On this interpretation, it would seem to take a feat of hermeneutical heroics to construe the experience as *in* any way concerned with an ontologically ultimate Real *an sich*. Yet, Hick would still insist that there is actually a Real that is grounding Dōgen's phenomenal experience: "When Sunyata is understood in this sense, as referring to the ultimate reality beyond the scope of all concepts, knowable only in its manifestations, then it is indeed equivalent to what in our pluralistic hypothesis we are calling the Real."[57]

Besides the ontological fallacy that I see at work in Hick's interpretation of Zen, there is also another internal inconsistency of logic that seems, at least prima facie, to damn Hick's hypothesis. That is, it seems as if the soteriological end of Zen (i.e., enlightenment) is predicated upon the necessary condition of an unmediated awareness of the sort characterized by Forman. As Dōgen states, "When freed from the bondage of sound, color, and shape, you will naturally become one with the true Bodhi-mind.... Thought, discrimination, and so forth should be avoided in the practice of the Way."[58] However, according to Hick's model, this state of affairs is logically impossible. Hence, one is left with an epistemological dilemma: either (a) Dōgen is correct in asserting that "cognitive filters" have no place in the Zen experience, and thus Hick's model would seem to need structural revision, or (b) Hick is correct in averring that all religious experience, including the state of satori, necessarily involves mediational devices, in which case Dōgen seems to be under a spell of delusion (perhaps he has not yet awakened to the "true" nature of things).[59] Whatever the case may be, it would seem to be scholarly imprudence on the part of Hick to dismiss, out of hand, unmediated experiences of the sort recognized by the Zen tradition.[60]

III

Perhaps due to the lack of a metaphysical component (on the purely experiential level), Hick's soteriological model seems to be, on the whole, consonant with the phenomenological process of Zen enlightenment. For Hick, salvation/liberation is "the transformation of human existence from self-centeredness to Reality-centeredness," which is "essentially the same within the different religious contexts within which it occurs."[61] And within the Zen context, Hick sees the process the following way: "Experienced from the self-enclosed ego's point of view human existence is Samsara, an endless round of anxiety-ridden living and dying. But experienced by the ego-less consciousness of the liberated mind the same ordinary human existence is Nirvana!"[62]

Likewise, Dōgen's soteriological model ostensively seems to engage the same mechanism:

> Conveying the self to the myriad things to authenticate them is delusion; the myriad things advancing to authenticate the self is enlightenment.... To study the Buddha Way is to study the Self. To study the self is to forget the self. To forget the self is to be authenticated by the myriad things. To be authenticated by the myriad things is to drop off the mind-body of oneself and others.[63]

However, notwithstanding their similarities, I would contend that Dōgen extends Hick's soteriological model to encompass compassionate activity as a necessary, practical component of enlightenment.

Dōgen's religious enterprise can be seen as comprised of two coextensive components, one ontological/epistemological and one ethical, that conflate to form a unified, practical soteriology. Hence, both components are necessary if one is to achieve enlightenment. The schema can be stated as follows:

1. Ontological/epistemological: impermanence, or interdependent origination, as the fundamental principle of phenomena.
2. Ethical: the moral priority of compassion, manifest in the Bodhisattva Vow, as the motivational ground of existence.
3. Soteriological: enlightenment as the constant actualization/exertion of the impermanence/interdependence of reality through the activity of compassion.

The soteriological aspect of Dōgen's schema is practical insofar as it emerges from the existential priority of acting. For example, in the *Gyōji* he states:

> The great Way of the Buddha and the Patriarchs involves the highest form of exertion, which goes on unceasingly in cycles from the first dawning of religious truth, through the test of discipline and practice, to enlightenment and Nirvana. It is sustained exertion, proceeding without lapse from cycle to cycle. Accordingly it is exertion which is neither self-imposed nor imposed by others, but free and uncoerced.[64]

In this sense, Dōgen's vision seems to be akin to the sort of operationalism of the later Wittgenstein ("it is our *acting*, which lies at the bottom of the language-game").[65]

In addition to the practical component, Dōgen also qualifies his soteriological vision by restricting the ultimacy of the experience for the individual. Quoting his "authentic teacher" Ju-Ching,[66] Dōgen states: "Although the sitting in meditation of arhats and pratyekabuddhas transcends attachment, it lacks great compassion. Therefore it is not identical with the sitting in meditation of the buddhas and patriarchs, who consider great compassion first, whereby they save all sentient beings."[67] Dōgen's introduction of the "altruistic vow" as a prerequisite to enlightenment seems to be a move toward stripping the notion of enlightenment of identity. Thus, it is not a matter of "my," "his," or "their" enlightenment, but just enlightenment. As Kiyota Kimura notes:

> Thus for Dōgen the bodhi-mind represents a totally altruistic and nondiscriminating mind of compassion, and it therefore differs from gratitude or affection directed toward a particular person. At the same time, it is not simply an inner spiritual quality but a psychosomatic quality, which is being continually manifested through concrete action.[68]

In the *Bodaisatta-shishōbō* (Bodhisattva's four methods of guidance), Dōgen goes on to delineate four concrete ways of succoring others to salvation. They are:

> (1) Giving: "Giving means nongreed. Nongreed means not to covet. Not to covet means not to curry favor.... Whether it is of teaching or of material, each gift has its value and is worth giving. Even if the gift is not your own, there is no reason to keep from giving. The question is not whether the gift is valuable, but whether there is merit."
>
> (2) Kind speech: "Kind speech means that when you see sentient beings you arouse the mind of compassion and offer words of loving care. It is contrary to cruel or violent speech."
>
> (3) Beneficial action: "Beneficial action is skillfully to benefit all classes of sentient beings, that is, to care about their distant and near future, and to help them by using skillful means."
>
> (4) Identity-action: "Identity-action means nondifference. It is nondifference from self, nondifference from others.... 'Action' means right form, dignity, correct manner. This means that you cause yourself to be in identity with others after causing others to be in identity with you. However, the relationship of self and others varies limitlessly with circumstances."[69]

In this way, in Dōgen a mentalistic approach to the notion of enlightenment (e.g., "this mind-itself is Buddha") seems to be superseded by a practical orientation toward compassionate activity. For Dōgen, compassionate activity is the ultimate verification of the epistemic prowess of the Zen adept.

The implications of Dōgen's soteriological model for the connection between religious experience and moral action seem to be manifold. To begin with, unlike Hick, for whom religious activity seems to flow out of the soteriological occasion,[70] Dōgen sees the soteriological occasion flowing out of religious activity, insofar as this activity is truly compassionate (i.e., with right mindfulness, right views, right effort, etc.). The epistemological awareness of the emptiness and interdependence of all phenomena does not seem to be sufficient in and of itself to be properly salvific within Dōgen's schema, for this would entail a logical contradiction of "possessing" a "something" that ultimately does not "exist," or is continually arising and perishing—that is, "Buddha-nature." In this sense, Dōgen seems to be invoking the Bodhisattva Vow, or Altruistic Vow, to limit the extent to which an epistemic/phenomenal experience is definitively soteriological for the aspirant. Dōgen states in his *Shōbō genzō zuimonki:* "If you have attained enlightenment, you should not halt the practice of the Way by thinking of your present state as final. For the Way is infinite. Exert yourself in the Way ever more even after enlightenment."[71] Consequently, the experience of enlightenment, although necessary, is inert without the infusion of a moral component, that is, of compassionate activity. Dōgen thus dissolves the ostensive, perhaps merely conceptual, gap between religious experiences and moral actions.[72]

Although I do see a difference between the two soteriological approaches advanced by Dōgen and Hick, I think that the differences are a matter of emphasis more than substance, and in certain respects Hick's approach seems to be very flexible in regard to the Zen tradition. However, with respect to his epistemological and metaphysical foundations, I do not feel as charitable in my appraisal. Perhaps Hick could take some of his own advice and recognize that "it would be a mark of wisdom and maturity frankly to acknowledge our ignorance"[73] on matters that are not, even in principle, capable of being settled, and instead extend his thesis to encompass a true plurality of ontological ultimates in which religious diversity and epistemological veridicality could still be maintained. In the words of Wittgenstein:

> We want to say that there can't be any vagueness in logic. The idea now absorbs us, that the ideal *"must"* be found in reality. Meanwhile we do not as yet see *how* it occurs there, nor do we understand the nature of this "must." We think it must be in reality; for we think we already see it there.[74]

NOTES

This essay grew out of a seminar on "Mysticism and Morality" given by Harold D. Roth and Sumner B. Twiss at Brown University. What little

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insight I may have been able to provide should be credited to their tutelage. Two longtime mentors, Mark Unno (Carleton College) and Taitetsu Unno (Smith College), as well as the reader for *Philosophy East and West,* were exceedingly generous with their time in reviewing earlier drafts. I must also thank the Contemporary Religious Thought Group at Brown, especially Wendell S. Dietrich and John P. Reeder, Jr., for providing such an intellectually fertile environment. And finally, this essay owes its philosophical life to the enduring support of Yeshey R. Lee.

1 – See John Hick, *Problems of Religious Pluralism* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985), *An Interpretation of Religion: Human Responses to the Transcendent* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), and *Disputed Questions in Theology and the Philosophy of Religion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993).

2 – Hick, *An Interpretation of Religion,* p. 240, and *God Has Many Names* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1982), p. 11.

3 – Hick, *An Interpretation of Religion,* p. 240.

4 See Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations,* 3d edition, trans. G.E.M. Anscombe (New York: Macmillan, 1968); see also his *Blue and Brown Books* (New York: Harper and Row, 1960), pp. 17, 81, 108, 172.

5 – Cf. Sumner B. Twiss, "The Philosophy of Religious Pluralism: A Critical Appraisal of Hick and His Critics," *Journal of Religion* 70 (October 1990): 568.

6 – Harold A. Netland, "Hick on Religious Pluralism," *Religious Studies* 22 (2) (June 1986): 261; see also Richard L. Corliss, "Redemption and the Divine Realities: A Study of Hick, and an Alternative," ibid., pp. 135–249, and Eliot Deutsch's review of Hick's *An Interpretation of Religion,* in *Philosophy East and West* 40 (4) (October 1990): 557–563.

7 – See Twiss, "Philosophy of Religious Pluralism," pp. 551–557.

8 – Hick, *Disputed Questions,* p. 164.

9 – Twiss, "Philosophy of Religious Pluralism," p. 557 n. 37.

10 – Since the treatment of Dōgen here will be that of a "philosopher," I direct the reader to Carl Bielefeldt's "Recarving the Dragon: History and Dogma in the Study of Dōgen," in *Dōgen Studies,* ed. William R. LaFleur (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1985), pp. 21–53, for a detailed study of Dōgen the "Zen Master." Bernard Faure suggests that the "mere fact of reading him [Dōgen] as an 'incomparable philosopher' or a 'medieval religious/sectarian figure' significantly affects the emerging subfield labeled Dōgen Studies and its various academic stakes" (Bernard Faure, *Chan Insights and Oversights: An Epistemological Critique of the Chan Tradition* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993], p. 146). This polemic is directed toward those (e.g., Robert Bellah in his "The Meaning of Dōgen Today," in *Dōgen Studies,* edited by William La Fleur [Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1985]) who, according to Faure, read into Dōgen a kind of hyperindividualism in radical dissonance to the sociohistorical context.

11 – Professor Twiss, in conversation, has suggested that I am perhaps not as charitable in my estimation of Hick's "ethical criterion" (i.e., his treatment of the Golden Rule) as I could be. While I do not deny the foundational place of *agapé/karuna* in Hick's soteriological model, I am concerned, at this point, to draw the temporal distinction that Dōgen seems to be intimating in the priority of compassion to salvation/liberation. For further treatment of this topic, see the end of this article.

12 – I may be accused here of embracing a "Protestant" view of Zen in which, as Robert Sharf has recently articulated, there is an "inordinate emphasis on prescriptive scriptural ideals" with little redress to the "cultural, political, and institutional contexts in which such ideals were propagated"; see his "Zen and the art of Deconstruction," *History of Religions* 33(3) (February 1994): 287–296. See also Gregory Schopen, "Archaeology and Protestant Presuppositions in the Study of Indian Buddhism," ibid., 31(1) (August 1991): 1–23. While I do appreciate the sociohistorical situatedness of Zen in general and Dōgen in particular, I do think one can legitimately engage in a conceptual-theoretical analysis that is informed by deconstructionist (e.g., Steven Heine) and ideological (e.g., Bernard Faure) critiques without being reduced to them. In fact, the matter is more practical than anything else. As Lee H. Yearley observes, engaging in a hermeneutics of suspicion (e.g., structuralist analysis, Marxist critiques) must be "detailed and delicate if it is to produce other than crass results"; see his "Conflicts among Ideals of Human Flourishing," in *Prospects for a Common Morality,* ed. Gene Outka and John P. Reeder, Jr. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), pp. 233–253.

13 – Hick, *Problems of Religious Pluralism,* p. 104.

14 – I am thinking here of Hilary Putnam's delineation: "The adoption of internal realism is the renunciation of a 'thing in itself'.... Internal realism says that the notion of a 'thing in itself' makes no sense; and not because 'we cannot know the things in themselves'. This was Kant's reason but ... internal realism says we don't know what

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we are talking about when we talk about 'things in themselves'" (Hilary Putnam, *The Many Faces of Realism: The Paul Carus Lectures* [La Salle, Illinois: Open Court, 1987], p. 36).

15 – Hick, *Problems of Religious Pluralism,* p. 16.

16 – Wayne Proudfoot, *Religious Experience* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), pp. 196–197); see also his "Religion and Reduction," *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* 37 (1 and 2) (Fall/Winter 1981–1982): 13–25.

17 – For example, Netland argues: "Since Hick's theory is a second-order theory about the nature of religions it seems clear that to the extent that certain major religious traditions do not find their views adequately accounted for on Hick's analysis the theory is called into question.... Thus, if there are significant elements of a religion which clash with Hick's analysis this prima facie counts against his theory" (Netland, "Hick on Religious Pluralism," p. 255).

18 – Cf. Twiss, "Philosophy of Religious Pluralism," p. 543.

19 – Hick, *An Interpretation of Religion,* p. 290.

20 – For example, he states: "Zen involves a complete acceptance of the world as a beginningless and endless flow.... It is not a thing [śūnyatā] or object or entity or substance but rather reality itself, formless or 'empty'[,] from our point of view not objectifiable by human thought" (Hick, *An Interpretation of Religion,* p. 290).

21 – Hick, *Disputed Questions,* p. 125; see also Hick, *God Has Many Names,* p. 83. Incidentally, Zen's postulate of a thoroughgoing impermanence seems, at least based on empirical evidence, to be just as warranted as, if not more warranted than, Hick's hypothesis of an unknowable transcendent Real.

22 – On the historical formation of the Sōtō sect as well as Dōgen's controverted role in its ascendance, see Bernard Faure's "The Daruma-shu, Dōgen, and Sōtō Zen," *Monumenta Nipponica* 42 (1) (1987): 24–55, and his *The Rhetoric of Immediacy: A Cultural Critique of Ch'an/Zen Buddhism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991).

23 – Quoted in Hee-jin Kim, *Dōgen Kigen: Mystical Realist* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1975), p. 135.

24 – Quoted in Yuho Yokoi, trans., *Zen Master Dōgen* (New York: Weatherhill, 1976), pp. 109, 58.

25 – *Busshō,* quoted in Kim, *Dōgen Kigen,* p. 131.

26 – Francis H. Cook, trans., *Sounds of Valley Streams* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), p. 73.

27 – Quoted in Kim, *Dōgen Kigen,* p. 120. I am using "Buddha-nature" and "impermanence" interchangeably here; however, I am aware of the tendentious nature of this supposition and the debates that have burgeoned in recent Japanese scholarship, centrally at Komazawa University. For an overview of this scholarly wrangle, see Paul Swanson, "'Zen Is Not Buddhism': Recent Japanese Critiques of Buddha-nature," *Numen* 40 (1993): 115–149.

28 – Joan Stambaugh, *Impermanence is Buddha-nature: Dōgen's Understanding of Temporality* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1990), pp. 21, 23.

29 – Hick, *Disputed Questions,* pp. 164, 174.

30 – Thomas Kasulis, *Zen Action/Zen Person* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1981), p. 81.

31 – David Little and Sumner B. Twiss, *Comparative Religious Ethics* (New York: Harper and Row, 1978), p. 214.

32 – At one point, Hick goes so far as to argue the following: "I suggest that dogmatic insistence upon the nonexistence of a creator, and again a dogmatic insistence that the universe does not have a teleological structure moving towards what we can refer to, in Buddhist language, as universal nirvana, would be to go beyond what is known within Buddhist experience. And to insist that this 'more' is the truth which everyone needs to know in order to find liberation would be soteriologically counterproductive" (Hick, *Disputed Questions,* p. 114). Clearly, Hick's theistic (perhaps ecumenical) proclivities seem to be rearing their heads. As a point of fact, however, Buddhism has never "dogmatically" engaged in any sort of anti-theistic campaign; rather, the tradition has understood questions of the sort alluded to by Hick as tending not toward "edification."

33 – See Hick, *Problems of Religious Pluralism,* chap. 6.

34 – Ibid., p. 95.

35 – David Putney, "Some Problems in Interpretation: The Early and Late Writings of Dōgen," *Philosophy East and West* 46 (3) (October 1996): 506.

36 – Hick, *Disputed Questions,* p. 108.

37 – Hick, *Problems of Religious Pluralism,* p. 81.

38 – William James, "The Pragmatist Account of Truth and Its Misunderstanders," in *Writings 1902–1910* (New York: Library of America, 1987), p. 922.

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39 – Indeed, Hick seems to suffer from what Peirce terms the "method of tenacity." Peirce writes:

> The force of habit will sometimes cause a man to hold on to old beliefs, after he is in a condition to see that they have no sound basis. But reflection upon the state of the case will overcome these habits, and he ought to allow reflection its full weight. People sometimes shrink from doing this, having an idea that beliefs are wholesome which they cannot help feeling rest on nothing.... The person who confesses that there is such a thing as truth ... and then, though convinced of this, dares not know the truth and seeks to avoid it, is in a sorry state of mind indeed. (Charles S. Peirce, "The Fixation of Belief," in *Philosophical Writings of Peirce,* selected and ed. with an introd. by Justus Buchler [New York, Dover, 1955], p. 21)

40 – See Hick, *Problems of Religious Pluralism,* chaps. 3, 6, and *Disputed Questions,* p. 177: "In Kantian terms, the noumenal Real is experienced—that is, enters into the phenomenal or experiential realm—through one or other of two basic concepts—the concept of deity, or of the Real as personal, and the concept of the absolute, or of the Real as non-personal."

41 – See Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations,* §74, §228, pp. 193–208; see also *The Blue and Brown Books,* pp. 163–165, 168–171, 173. It should be noted here that Wittgenstein himself did not in any way endorse such a schematization. He strictly limited the cases of seeing-as to particular moments of "recognition" when a certain "aspect" of an intentional object revealed itself: "One doesn't 'take' what one knows as the cutlery at a meal for cutlery; any more than one ordinarily tries to move one's mouth as one eats, or aims at moving it" *(Philosophical Investigations,* p. 195).

42 – Hick, *An Interpretation of Religion,* p. 12.

43 – Ibid., p. 195.

44 – See Forman's "Mystical Knowledge: Knowledge by Identity," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 61 (4) (Winter 1993): 705–739, and his "Paramartha and Modern Constructivists on Mysticism: Epistemological Monomorphism versus Duomorphism," *Philosophy East and West* 39 (4) (October 1989): 393–419; see also his edited volume, *The Problem of Pure Consciousness* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).

45 – For example, see Steven Katz' edited volumes, *Mysticism and Philosophical Analysis* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978) and *Mysticism and Religious Traditions* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983); see also Wayne Proudfoot's *Religious Experience.* The use of the term "mysticism" presents a pandora's box in terms of definition and application to different traditions. Specifically in regard to the Zen tradition, the term seems to have been insulated to the realm of consciousness as more or less a transformative experience simpliciter. However, although I critique Hick for his Kantian-cum-Wittgensteinian epistemological orientation and reserve a place for "pure consciousness," I think this picture must be augmented by an ethical component in the form of compassionate activity if we are to do justice to the richness of Zen religious experience. I tackle these topics in section III.

46 – Forman, "Mystical Knowledge," p. 705; see also Donald Rothberg's "Contemporary Epistemology and the Study of Mysticism," in Forman, *The Problem of Pure Consciousness,* pp. 163–210.

47 – Forman, "Mystical Knowledge," p. 708.

48 – Ibid., p. 709. Here it seems to me that Forman is taking a decidedly Cartesian approach in assuming introspective states to be incorrigible and transparent when in fact they may be dubitable and opaque. For example, it is not at all clear whether a subject's knowledge of his/her mental state can be verified without reference to some type of criteria (e.g., behavioral, physical, etc.) simply by being "aware" of them. In other words, is being in a mental state conceptually equivalent to believing that one is in a mental state? I do not have space here to investigate this query further. However, David Armstrong makes a powerful argument that we cannot have indubitable introspective knowledge; see his "Introspective Knowledge Incorrigible," *Philosophical Review* 72 (4) (October 1963): 417–432. See also Sydney Shoemaker, *Self-Knowledge and Self-Identity* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1963), esp. chap. 6, and Richard Rorty, "Mind-Body Identity, Privacy, and Categories," *Review of Metaphysics* 19 (1) (September 1965): 41–48.

49 – Forman, "Mystical Knowledge," p. 719.

50 – Ibid., pp. 720–721.

51 – By "a priori" I mean here the causal necessity that Katz sees as obtaining between the antecedent beliefs and commitments one brings to an experience and the resultant experience; see Steven T. Katz, "Language, Epistemology, and Mysticism," in Katz, *Mysticism and Philosophical Analysis,* pp. 22–74.

52 – Hick, *An Interpretation of Religion,* pp. 294–295.

53 – Ibid., p. 350.

54 – Quoted in Yokoi, *Zen Master Dōgen,* pp. 45–47.

55 – See Dale S. Wright, "Doctrine and the Concept of Truth in Dōgen's Shōbōgenzō," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 54 (2)

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(Summer 1986): "'To think without thinking' is to have so thoroughly set aside one's own will, desire, and subjectivity that one's thought reflects the occasion or situation at hand and not one's own design on it. Thought responds to the situation that evokes it by taking its bearings primarily from what is present, both here and now" (p. 272).

56 – Sallie B. King, "The Buddha Nature: True Self as Action," *Religious Studies* 20 (2) (June 1984): 266.

57 – Hick, *An Interpretation of Religion,* p. 291.

58 – Yokoi, *Zen Master Dōgen,* pp. 49, 54.

59 – Although Hick believes that in the final eschaton believers may be privy to a maximal "God-consciousness" ("One will be continuously aware of living in the divine presence; and that awareness will no longer be in tension with the circumstances of sin and suffering, ugliness and deprivation, which at present leave room for rational doubt"), this maneuver seems to occasion more epistemological morasses than it dissolves. For we are left with the following unsavory logical consequences: either (1) Hick must abandon his pragmatic justificatory scheme to account for maximal God-consciousness, and in the process perhaps alter the ontological status of the believer (e.g., to an angel, demigod, etc.), or (2) he must retain his pragmatic justificatory scheme even in the final eschaton, in which case we are left wondering how the religious adept would transcend the logico-conceptual limits of his/her epistemic *Weltanschauung.* To his credit, Hick attempts to palliate the philosophical tension created by this move, albeit in a question-begging manner. He states:

> The redeemed (whom I assume ultimately to include everyone—though this is of course a theological rather than a philosophical opinion) will have experienced in this world, or will have come to experience at some stage between this world and the final heavenly state, what they take to be an awareness of existing in the presence of God and of being freely led within the divine providence towards the fulfilment of their human potentialities in the community of humanity perfected. In experiencing their life in this way, and in believing in accordance with their experience, they believe in the reality of God and in the process of the universe as God's creative work. And this belief is progressively confirmed and then verified in the experience of moving towards and then participating in the eschatological situation of a perfected human community in which the consciousness of God's presence is universally shared. (Hick, *Problems of Religious Pluralism,* pp. 118–119)

Again, we see Hick donning his theological cap to the detriment of his philosophical cogency. For an illuminating critique of Hick's eschatological verification, see Beth Mackie, "Considering 'Eschatological Verification Reconsidered,'" *Religious Studies* 23 (1) (March 1987): 129–137.

60 – I detect in Hick's denial of unmediated experiences an ecumenical proclivity toward an egalitarian vision of the religious life. This optimistic orientation seems highly discernible in his picture of Zen soteriology. For example, he states:

> Does Buddhist teaching, however, say more than that a very special and wonderful state of consciousness is possible to those few who seek it with sufficient persistence.... Given that few seem to have the necessary spiritual and intellectual endowments and the practical possibility of devoting themselves wholeheartedly to the quest ... such a form of Buddhism could be relevant to a very small proportion of human beings.... Buddhism, interpreted in this way, would thus be good news for an elite few but, by contrast, bad news for the generality of the human race.... But clearly this cannot be the original or the historically normative understanding which has made Buddhism one of the great world religions. (Hick, *An Interpretation of Religion,* p. 181)

61 – Hick, *Problems of Religious Pluralism,* p. 29.

62 – Hick, *An Interpretation of Religion,* p. 281.

63 – *Genjō kōan,* quoted in Cook, *Sounds of Valley Streams,* p. 66.

64 – *The Buddhist Tradition,* ed. William Th. de Bary (New York: Vintage Books, 1972), p. 369.

65 – Ludwig Wittgenstein, *On Certainty,* trans. Denis Paul and G.E.M. Anscombe (New York: Harper and Row, 1972), §204. By "langauge-game" I mean a system "consisting of language and the actions into which it is woven." See Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations,* §7; see also Michael G. Harvey, "Wittgenstein's Notion of 'Theology of Grammar'," *Religious Studies* 2 (1) (March 1989): 95.

66 – The relationship between Dōgen and Ju-ching is shrouded in hagiographic accounts and later redactions by Dōgen's disciples of the *Hōkyō ki.* Carl Bielefeldt suggests that Dōgen, contrary to popular opinion, does not accord Ju-ching pride of place until his "later" period, when internal circumstances within Japanese Buddhist circles seem to have aggravated such methods of legitimation: "Dōgen's new teachings, whatever their ostensible subject, tell us more about Zen in Japan than in China; and that, whatever their reputed origins, they are less a product of his enlightenment as a student on the continent than of his ambitions as a teacher—and, be it admitted, as a politician manqué—in his own country" (Bielefeldt, "Recarving the Dragon," p. 41).

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67 – Takashi James Kodera, *Dōgen's Formative Years in China: An Historical Study and Annotated Translation of the Hōkyō-ki* (Boulder, Colorado: Prajna Press, 1980), p. 134.

68 – Kiyotaka Kimura, "The Self in Medieval Japanese Buddhism: Focusing on Dōgen," *Philosophy East and West* 41 (3) (July 1991): 333.

69 – *Moon in a Dewdrop: Writings of Zen Master Dōgen,* ed. Kazuaki Tanahashi (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1985), pp. 44–47.

70 – In this sense, Hick's schema may be characterized as "experiential" in nature. See Ninian Smart, "Our Experience of the Ultimate," *Religious Studies* 20 (1) (March 1984): 19; Smart sees Hick as part of an experientialist tradition with a strong propositionalist element.

71 – Quoted in Kim, *Dōgen Kigen,* p. 66.

72 – The inclusion of an ethical component into the Zen soteriological equation militates against the perceived view of Zen as a tradition fixated on the priority of enlightenment, both temporally and normatively. Christopher Ives suggests that doubts about the ethical relevance of Zen have revolved around the following aspects of the tradition: the overwhelming emphasis on Awakening as the basis of a truly ethical way of life; the apparent tension between śūnyatā and ethics; the stress on immediacy, nondiscrimination, and suchness; and the espousal of "transcending good and evil." The suspicions of antinomianism and ethical *akrasia* are further substantiated by examining the ethical and political stances that Zen has embraced in Japanese history, and the cumulative result is what Ives sees as a de facto social ethic constituted by a "pro-government, largely Confucian approach to society" (Christopher Ives, *Zen Awakening and Society* [Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1992], p. 67). These considerations lead Ives to conclude that while Zen does contain "significant resources for a social ethic," Zen does not necessarily lead to social engagement or social engagement in consonance with certain Buddhist principles and ideals. To a degree, this critique seems apposite in regard to the kind of ennui that most Zen masters seemed to have with social activism as a form of compassion. Dōgen, for example, seems to have been preoccupied with monastic codes and sectarian polemics, particularly during his "late period," rather than with what could be considered a full-blown ethical theory. However, in another sense, this critique seems somewhat anachronistic and culturally biased. Indeed, one may question the availability of semantic notions like "ethical theory" or even "social activism" in the cultural context of Kamakura Japan. It can be argued that though ethical resources were extant in the Zen tradition, the philosophico-cultural context was not in place for the extension and realization of those resources. The present study of Dōgen can be seen as an attempt to rehabilitate precisely those notions (e.g., the priority of compassion over mere religious edification) that can be extrapolated to construct what we may properly call an ethical theory. I have tried to do this in regard to human rights in my "Human Rights and Compassion: Practical Not Metaphysical" (unpublished manuscript). See also Damien Keown, "Are There 'Human Rights' in Buddhism?" *Journal of Buddhist Ethics* (1995); the Dalai Lama, "Human Rights and Universal Responsibility," *The United Nations World Conference on Human Rights* (15 June 1993); and the papers by the Dalai Lama, Thich Nhat Hanh, Sulak Sivaraksa, and Walpola Rahula in *The Path of Compassion: Writings on Socially Engaged Buddhism* (Berkeley: Parallax Press, 1988).

73 – Hick, *Disputed Questions,* p. 116.

74 – Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations,* § 101.

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THE PROBLEM OF THE HISTORICAL NĀGĀRJUNA REVISITED

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Nāgārjuna, the founder of Madhyamaka, is an enigma. Scholars are unable to agree upon a date for him (within the first three centuries A.D.), or a place (almost anywhere in India), or even the number of Nāgārjunas (from one to four). This article suggests that none of the commonly advanced arguments about his date or habitat can be proved; that later Nāgārjunas are more likely to have been (in some sense) the authors of pseudepigrapha than real individuals; that the most attractive (though unproved) reading of the evidence sets Nāgārjuna in the general area of the Andhra country in about the third century A.D.

> And to this legacy [of Buddhism in Andhra] has richly contributed Nāgārjuna Bodhisattva, the Aristotle of Buddhist lore, the Christ of Mādhyamika, and the St. Paul of Mahāyāna, a magical name baffling the most brainy in sheer intellectual power and moral force.[1]

CLAIMS ABOUT THE LIFE OF NĀGĀRJUNA are often asserted as if the facts were known and secure, when they are not. Those who explore the evidence in quest of more secure facts come up with contradictory conclusions.

Even the century or centuries in which Nāgārjuna lived cannot be confidently identified. Scholarly references to Nāgārjuna frequently take it as given that he lived in the second century, sometimes specifying the latter half of it.[2] On the basis of the archaeological evidence reported by K. R. Subramanian, whose 1932 publication is cited above, Venkata Ramanan drew the conclusion that Nāgārjuna flourished within the period A.D. 50–120.[3] A recent account of Buddhist philosophy, by D. Kalupahana, similarly takes Subramanian as an authority, yet (citing Nakamura) assigns Nāgārjuna to A.D. 150–250.[4] Shohei Ichimura claims that Nāgārjuna lived from about A.D. 50 to about 150.[5] He says: "The earliest dates ever postulated for the times of Nāgārjuna were proposed by Prof. H. Ui as A.D. 113 and 213"[6]—but as we have seen this is wrong.

Substantially later dates also find their protagonists. For example, E. Lamotte was influenced by Chinese evidence, interpreted by him to entail that Nāgārjuna's dates were A.D. 243–c. 300.[7] *Prima facie*, Chinese sources appear more useful than Indian ones (although as we shall see the results for the biography of Nāgārjuna are disappointing), and this chronology, supported also by J. May,[8] should not be ignored.

[1] K. R. Subramanian, *Buddhist Remains in Andhra* (Madras: Diocesan Press, 1932), 62.

[2] For example, F. J. Streng, in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, s.v. Nāgārjuna; and in *Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. M. Eliade (N.Y.: Macmillan, 1987), s.v. Nāgārjuna; T. R. V. Murti, *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1955), 87f. Murti also states (p. 88) that Nāgārjuna was "probably a Brāhman from the south who came to Nālandā" (which did not in fact become a center of Buddhist learning until the Gupta period: see A. D. Sankalia, *The Nālandā University* [Delhi: Oriental Publishers, 1972], 48–59).

[3] K. Venkata Ramanan, *Nāgārjuna's Philosophy, as Presented in the Mahā-Prajñāpāramitā-Śāstra* (Rutland, Vt.: Tuttle, 1966), 30.

[4] David J. Kalupahana, *A History of Buddhist Philosophy* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1992), 160; H. Nakamura, *Indian Buddhism* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1989), 235. This chronology has been accepted by most Japanese scholars (*ibid.*, 236, n. 4).

[5] Shohei Ichimura, "Re-examining the Period of Nāgārjuna: Western India, A.D. 50–150," *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies* 40.2 (1992): 8–14 (= 1079–73).

[6] Ibid., 8; cf. the citation, ibid., 14, n. 3; and H. Nakamura, *Indian Buddhism*, 236, n. 4.

[7] E. Lamotte, *L'Enseignement de Vimalakīrti* (Louvain, 1962), 74–77.

[8] J. May, '*Chūgan*', *Hōbōgirin* 5 (1979): 473a, 478b.

Chronologies proposed vary freely between the first and third centuries.[9] One scholar, indeed, has claimed that "we do not think it an impossibility or absurdity to assign to him an age of about two hundred years," and assigns Nāgārjuna's life to a period from the early first century B.C. to the early second A.D.[10]

Nāgārjuna's career has been variously located in widely different parts of India, often in the south (the late Sātavāhana stronghold along the Krishna, or further north in "Dakṣiṇakośala"), but sometimes in the west, the northwest, or the northeast. Again, for some, there is only one Nāgārjuna, while for others there are two, three, or four.[11]

There is no need, however, to engage in any extended survey of the modern scholarship. It is clear that what has proved "baffling to the most brainy" is the quest for knowledge about Nāgārjuna's life. Is the present state of confusion caused by any defect in scholarly method or rigor, or is it caused by the sheer inadequacy of the evidence to support any one convincing interpretation?

This question needs to be confronted squarely. If (as I believe) the second answer is the correct one, a demonstration of the limits of the evidence can serve a valuable purpose. The common habit of assigning Nāgārjuna to the second century is not properly justified; it is a self-validating majority vote, or a median possibility, rather than a demonstrable probability. I am inclined to believe that Nāgārjuna may have lived later, but this cannot be proved; the purpose of the following survey is chiefly to show that claims commonly made are not well founded.

This is not, of course, the only sort of purpose that might be served by a study of the sources bearing on Nāgārjuna's life. An important set of questions, not addressed here, concerns the role of hagiography in religious history, a topic that has been attracting increasing attention. The treatment of Nāgārjuna as a supernatural figure is itself a phenomenon to be investigated.[12] However, my interest is not in those sources which present the fantastic but in those most likely to furnish historical evidence.

In what follows, a positive methodological contribution is also intended. It concerns our treatment of the many later works, mostly more or less tantric, which are traditionally credited to "Nāgārjuna" but are unlikely to be by the original mādhyamika philosopher. The later works in question were written by real people, but it is perhaps an error to suppose that they must all be attributable to some unique individual (or even two or three distinguishable individuals) who happened, confusingly, to have also the name Nāgārjuna. Instead of a very small number of authentic Nāgārjunas, perhaps we should seek rather a large number of people who played parts in the transmission of a legend. This point will be amplified below.

Finally, the present study is also informed by a survey of the results of archaeological research in the sites along the Krishna, a category of evidence which needs to be more closely integrated into the study of Nāgārjuna's life than hitherto.

* * *

For the purpose of this discussion, unless otherwise specified, the name Nāgārjuna shall designate the author, whoever he may be, of the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikās* and of whatever other works can be agreed to come from the same writer. The interest here is in the philosopher of Madhyamaka; works of other sorts (tantric or proto-scientific) will be noticed only insofar as they have been held by some writers to share authorship with the Nāgārjuna here identified. Where it is necessary to speak of more than one individual possibly bearing the same name, they can be distinguished as Nāgārjuna I (the mādhyamika), Nāgārjuna II, and so forth.

Various sorts of evidence will here be given short shrift, on the assumption that there is little to be gained from them. Chronologies based on traditional lineages of teachers in Chinese or Tibetan do not appear promising avenues of enquiry. Tibetan sources in general seem too far removed from the age of Nāgārjuna to furnish significant independent evidence. The study of the internal evidence of some philosophical literature (Nyāya, for example), is of a different order, and may raise more questions than it answers; here it is left on one side.[13]

[9] See D. Seyfort Ruegg, *The Literature of the Madhyamaka School of Philosophy in India*, History of Indian Literature, vol. VII, fasc. 1 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1981), 4f.

[10] L. Joshi, "Life and Times of the Mādhyamika Philosopher Nāgārjuna," *Mahābodhi* 73.1–2 (1965): 46f.

[11] See for example V. W. Karambelkar, "The Problem of Nāgārjuna," *Journal of Indian History* 30.1 (1952): 21–35; N. Dutt, "Nāgārjunikoṇḍa and Nāgārjuna," *Indian Historical Quarterly* 7 (1931): 636–69.

[12] The legendary material has been examined by M. Walleser, "The Life of Nāgārjuna from Tibetan and Chinese Sources," in *Asia Major: Hirth Anniversary Volume*, ed. B. Schindler (rpt. Delhi, 1979), 421–55; the dynamics of hagiography in relation to Nāgārjuna are discussed by Jan Yun-hua, "Nāgārjuna, One or More? A New Interpretation of Buddhist Hagiography," *History of Religions* 10 (1970): 139–53.

[13] The importance of Nyāya principles in the elucidation of Nāgārjuna's *Vigrahavyāvartanī* has even now perhaps not

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A table of all the works traditionally accredited to Nāgārjuna would need to include a very large number of texts extant in Tibetan and Chinese, as well as those in Sanskrit, but many of these are not taken seriously and need not concern us. There is no space here for a review of the case for including or excluding particular works in a bibliography of Nāgārjuna: we can only note that the attributions of modern scholars all differ, as can be seen from a comparison of the conclusions of a number of writers: Winternitz,[14] Robinson,[15] T. R. V. Murti,[16] D. Seyfort Ruegg,[17] C. Lindtner,[18] and P. L. Vaidya.[19]

There is perhaps only a small core of the philosophical texts that clearly belong with the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* as the work of one author. Of the works credited to Nāgārjuna in the Tibetan tradition, six (the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, *Śūnyatāsaptati*, *Vigrahavyāvartani*, *Vaidalyaprakaraṇa*, *Vyavahārasiddhi* and *Yuktiṣaṣṭikā*) are listed together as works of Nāgārjuna by Buston (thirteenth to fourteenth centuries); these are specifically philosophical works. Elsewhere, as has sometimes been overlooked, he mentions others—the *Ratnāvalī*, *Sūtrasamuccaya*, *Bodhisambhāra*[*ka*], *Suhṛllekha*, and the *Svapnacintāmaṇiparikathā*.[20] The credentials of the *Śūnyatāsaptati*, the *Vigrahavyāvartani* and the *Yuktiṣaṣṭikā* are rarely disputed. It is difficult to study the *Vigrahavyāvartani*, for example, without recognizing the essential identity of thought behind it and the *Kārikās*. The *Catuḥstava*, also commonly attributed to Nāgārjuna I, is a special case which will be noticed further below; it is a set of four devotional hymns, thus quite different in *genre* from the others mentioned, and there is doubt about which particular four hymns constitute it. Also significant is the attribution of the *Sūtrasamuccaya* to Nāgārjuna by Śāntideva in his *Bodhicaryāvatāra*,[21] which constitutes a relatively early attribution of one core text.

Some of the works traditionally attributed to Nāgārjuna (and accepted as his works by C. Lindtner[22]), such as the *Bodhicittavivaraṇa* and the *Vaidalyaprakaraṇa*, have had their authenticity seriously questioned.[23] The attribution to Nāgārjuna of the *Suhṛllekha*, a manual largely of ethical teachings in the form of a letter to a friend, a king, has been contested.[24] As for the *Ratnāvalī*, T. Vetter's analysis of its metrical characteristics and word frequency casts doubt upon it too.[25]

Among the miscellaneous works of chemistry and medicine traditionally ascribed to Nāgārjuna, it should be noted that the *Yogaśataka*, a medical text, has been accepted by Filliozat,[26] but the attribution is arguably implausible.[27]

The *Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa* has long been treated as an authentic work of Nāgārjuna, but in fact is unlikely to be by him despite the weight of tradition; Lamotte originally accepted the tradition but changed his mind before he edited the third volume of his study and translation.[28]

The only conclusion that can be advanced here is that relatively few works can be treated with any confidence as authentic creations of the master. These few are written in an abstract, anonymous style. Thus, when we turn to internal evidence for biographical information, there are no very firm conclusions to be drawn, chiefly because the best-attested works are the least chatty.

The best sort of source for biographical materials must be sought in other works which refer to Nāgārjuna. Let us first consider originally Indian sources (some of which are no longer extant in Sanskrit).

The *Laṅkāvatāra*, known in Chinese and Tibetan translations, dates from as early as the fifth century. Chapter X was added to it, presumably between 443 and 513 A.D., the dates of the translations of Guṇabhadra and Bodhiruci, respectively.[29] It contains an apocryphal prophecy of the Buddha, saying:

> *dakṣiṇāpatha-vedalyāṃ bhikṣuḥ śrīmān mahāyaśaskaḥ*
> *nāgāhvayaḥ sa nāmnā tu sadasatpakṣadāraṇaḥ* 165[30]
>
> In Vedali [Vidarbha?], in the southern region, there will be an illustrious monk of great renown bearing, indeed, the appellation Nāga (*or* by name Nāgāhvaya [?]); he will destroy the views of existence and non-existence.[31]

The following verse celebrates this "Nāgāhvaya" as the declarer of Mahāyāna.

Various other sources associate Nāgārjuna with Vidarbha, and some have taken the "Vedali" here to refer to it, but this has been disputed.[32] Tibetan tradition picked up the association of Nāgārjuna with Vidarbha, but the origins of the tradition are obscure. The present passage is weak evidence. In the Tibetan, the name appears as *Vedahi*,[33] and P. S. Sastri has argued with abundant reference to local toponyms that a name like Vedali is likely to place Nāgārjuna's birthplace in the Andhra country.[34]

It has been seriously questioned whether "Nāgāhvaya" (whether a name in its own right, or a manner of allusion: "called Nāga") really identifies our Nāgārjuna. *Nāgāhvayaḥ sa nāmnā*, of course, may imply that the term *āhvaya*, "appellation," is part of the name, and from Sumpa and Tāranātha we have references to a Nāgāhvaya who is apparently a disciple of the original Nāgārjuna or who is otherwise known as Tathāgatabhadra.[35] The doubters may all be wrong; given the fame of Nāgārjuna, he rather than anybody else is likely to be given the credit for assailing the concepts of existence and non-existence; and there is some precedent for seeing "called Nāga" as a way of referring to him.[36] However, it is clear that the *Laṅkāvatāra* does not offer any potential biographical information beyond the problematic allusion to "Vedali."

Also relatively early, but evidence of quite a different sort, is an inscription on a stele originally found on the northwest side of the Jaggayyapeta stūpa. This site is on the Krishna. The inscription is on the base of the panel containing a high-relief standing Buddha image. It reads:

> *svasti bhadanta nāgārjunācāryasya śiṣya[syo] jayaprabhācāryya[ḥ] tucchiṣyena ca[ndra]prabheṇa kārāpitāṃ satu[tya?]-sugata-gataprasada-viśeṣa-viśiṣṭa-saṃsāre devamanu[ja]vibhūtipūrvvakaṃ buddhattva-prāpti-nimittaṃ buddha-pratimāṃ pratiṣṭhā[ṣṭhā]pitāṃ anumodand [pakṣe?] kurvvantu sarvve saugaty-āgryā[?]nyo pi*[37]

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received all the recognition it deserves. On the relative chronology of Nāgārjuna and Nyāya, see J. Bronkhorst, "Nāgārjuna and the Naiyāyikas," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 13 (1985): 107–32; on the dialogue between Nyāya and Madhyamaka see P. S. Sastri, "Nāgārjuna and Āryadeva," *Indian Historical Quarterly* 31.3 (1955): 193–202.

[14] M. Winternitz, *History of Indian Literature*, vol. II (Calcutta: Calcutta U.P., 1933), 346f.

[15] R. Robinson, *Early Madhyamika in India and China* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1976), 26f.

[16] T. R. V. Murti, *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism*, 88–91.

[17] D. Ruegg, *The Literature of the Madhyamaka School of Philosophy in India*, 8–29.

[18] C. Lindtner, *Nāgārjuniana: Studies in the Writings and Philosophy of Nāgārjuna* (Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1982), 9–18, esp. p. 11. His list of thirteen includes all the most reasonable works of our Nāgārjuna I, but also includes several that other scholars would be unwilling to accept.

[19] P. L. Vaidya, ed., *The Madhyamakaśāstra of Nāgārjuna with the Commentary Prasannapadā by Candrakīrti* (Darbhanga: Mithila Institute of Postgraduate Studies, 1960), xv.

[20] J. W. de Jong, Review of E. Lamotte, *Le Traité de la Grande Vertu de Sagesse de Nāgārjuna*, III, in *Asia Major* 17 (1971): 109; Buston, *History of Buddhism*, tr. E. Obermiller (Delhi: Satguru Publications, 1986), I: 50–51, II: 125; cf. T. R. V. Murti, *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism*, 88, 91; D. Ruegg, *The Literature of the Madhyamaka School of Philosophy in India*, 8–29.

[21] *Bodhicaryāvatāra* 5.106.

[22] Lindtner, *Nāgārjuniana*.

[23] See T. Vetter, *Asiatische Studien* 46.1 (1992): 393.

[24] *Nāgārjuna's Letter to King Gautamīputra, with Explanatory Notes Based on Tibetan Commentaries*, tr. the Ven. Lozang Jamspal et al. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1978); S. Dietz, ("The Author of the Suhṛllekha," in *Contributions on Tibetan and Buddhist Religion and Philosophy*, ed. E. Steinkellner and H. Tauscher [Wien: Arbeitskreis für tibetische und buddhistische Studien, 1983], 59–72) considers the metre of the work, the nature of references to Mahāyāna, and the doctrinal content, and casts doubt on its connection with Nāgārjuna.

[25] C. Lindtner, *Nāgārjuniana*, 163–69; T. Vetter, op. cit.

[26] J. Filliozat, *Yogaśataka: Texte médical attribué à Nāgārjuna* (Pondicherry, 1979).

[27] K. Zysk, *Asceticism and Healing in Ancient India: Medicine in the Buddhist Monastery* (N.Y.: O.U.P., 1991), 64, n. 3.

[28] E. Lamotte, ed., *Traité de la Grande Vertu de Sagesse de Nāgārjuna (Mahāprajñāpāramitāśāstra)*, vol. III (chs. XXXI–XLII) (Louvain: Institut Orientaliste de Louvain, 1970); idem, *L'Enseignement de Vimalakīrti* (Louvain: Publications Universitaires, 1962), 74–77; and "Der Verfasser des Upadeśa und seine Quellen," *Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen*, phil.-hist. Kl., 2 (1973): 3–5; J. W. de Jong, review of *Le Traité de la Grande Vertu de Sagesse*, 105–12.

[29] M. Walleser, "The Life of Nāgārjuna from Tibetan and Chinese Sources," 437; D. T. Suzuki, ed., *The Lankavatara-sutra* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1932), 226–95.

[30] For the text, see V. Karambelkar, "The Problem of Nāgārjuna," 23.

[31] See also D. T. Suzuki, *Lankavatarasutra*, 239f.

[32] On Vedali and Vidarbha, see P. S. Sastri, "Nāgārjuna and Āryadeva," 193–202; N. Dutt, "Notes on the Nāgārjunikoṇḍa Inscriptions, I: Nāgārjunikoṇḍa and Nāgārjuna," *Indian Historical Quarterly* 7 (1931): 635, n. 6.

[33] N. Dutt, "Nāgārjunikoṇḍa and Nāgārjuna," 635, n. 6.

[34] P. S. Sastri, "Nāgārjuna and Āryadeva," 193–96.

[35] Tāranātha, *History of Buddhism in India*, tr. Lama Chimpa and Alaka Chattopadhyaya (Simla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, 1970), 123, 126; D. Ruegg, "Le Dharmadhātustava de Nāgārjuna," *Etudes tibetaines dédiées à la mémoire de Marcel Lalou* (Paris: Librairie d'Amérique et d'Orient, 1976), 449, n. 8.

[36] M. Walleser, "The Life of Nāgārjuna from Tibetan and Chinese sources," 439f.

[37] J. Burgess, *Notes on the Amarāvati Stūpa* (Madras: Archaeological Survey of Southern India, 1882), 112 (cf. also, p. 57); T. N. Ramachandran, *Nāgārjunakoṇḍa*, Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India, no. 71, (Delhi: Archaeological

The somewhat problematic text here incorporates the readings suggested by R. G. Bhandarkar and cited by J. Burgess; the sense of it can be rendered approximately:

> Salute! The disciple of the Teacher Nāgārjuna was the Teacher Jayaprabha. May all beings, even though themselves denied the perfection of Buddhahood, rejoice in sympathy at the Buddha image caused to be made by (Jayaprabha's) disciple Candraprabha, inaugurated for the purpose of the attainment of Buddhahood following upon prosperity in the world of gods and men in the course of a round of births distinguished by the great favors of the real Buddha.

Thus the inscription records an endowment of a Buddha image by an individual whose teacher's teacher was "Bhadanta Nāgārjunācārya." This would be exciting if it could easily be made to fit plausibly with other evidence of the individual we are seeking. However, on paleographical grounds the inscription has been dated to about 600 by Burgess, to 450–500 A.D. by Ramachandran.[38] A fourth-century date for Nāgārjuna, the earliest that could be managed on this evidence, has not been persuasively argued so far, and the allusion in this inscription must remain a mystery for the time being, though there will be occasion to revert to it briefly at the end of this study.

Bāṇa's *Harṣacarita* (seventh century) is the first Sanskrit text to make the link, widespread in the literature, between Nāgārjuna and his friend "Sātavāhana, the lord of the three oceans."[39] The relevant passage tells of the fate of a string of pearls magically made by Vāsuki, Lord of Serpents, from the tears wept by the moon:

> *samatikrāmati ca kiyaṭyapi kāle kadācit tām ekāvalim tasmān nāgarājān nāgārjuno nāma nāgair evānitaḥ pātālatalaṃ bhikṣur abhikṣata lebhe ca / nirgatya rasātalāt trisamudrādhipataye sātavāhanānāmne narendrāya suhṛde sa dadau tām / sā cāsmākaṃ kālena śiṣyaparamparayā katham api hastam upagatā.*[40]

As time passed by, eventually a monk called Nāgārjuna was brought to Pātālatala [the abode of the nāgas among the underworlds] by the nāgas, begged this string from the Lord of the Nāgas, and received it. Upon his departure from the infernal regions, he gave it to his friend the king called Sātavāhana, Lord of the Three Oceans, and in the course of time it came to our hand through the lineage of disciples.

The link with the Sātavāhanas, obscure though it is, nevertheless constitutes one of our best pieces of evidence about the life of Nāgārjuna; it will be taken up again below. The rhetorical character of the *Harṣacarita*, though, makes it unwise to place weight upon its fine detail.

Another text of equivocal value is the *Mahāmeghasūtra*, extant in Chinese and Tibetan versions, though the line of descent of these versions is unclear and there is doubt how far they share a single origin.[41] According to Demiéville, this text, which was translated into Chinese by the fourth and fifth centuries, was probably the same as one referred to by Candrakīrti in the *Madhyamakāvatāra*, where he calls it the *Āryadvādaśasāhasramahāmegha*, attributing to it the prophecy that Nāgārjuna would be born in the future and teach the Dharma.[42]

Now, the Chinese text contains a number of spurious prophecies attributed to the Buddha; according to one, the Buddha prophesied to emissaries from the south, coming from the Black Mountain (possibly a reference to the Andhra country and the hills around Nāgārjunakoṇḍa) that, twelve hundred years after his Nirvāṇa, there would be a great king called 娑多婆呵那, *so-to-p'o-ho-na*, EMC *sa-ta-ba-xa-na*[h] (reconstructions of Early Middle Chinese follow Pulleyblank), clearly representing "Sātavāhana." Further, also in south India, a certain "Nāgarāja" would be born in a place called Kusumamālā or Sumanamālā, near the river Sūpāyā, in Surāṣṭra, and give his life for the Dharma.[43] This prophecy is of doubtful relevance because it does not specify the name Nāgārjuna and offers biographical details not found elsewhere (though the name of the river does roughly correspond to the Tibetan version); the tenuous case for a connection must be built upon Candrakīrti's use of the text, if indeed the prophecy in the version of it available to us accurately represents what Candrakīrti's source said.

According to another prophecy in the Chinese version, the Buddha foretold that seven hundred years after his Nirvāṇa, in the southern kingdom called 無明, *wu-ming* ('no-light', i.e., 'dark', = *andha*, translating āndhra), on the south bank of the river 黑閣, *hei-an* ('black', i.e., Kṛṣṇa), there would be a town called 孰谷, *shou-ku* ('ripe-grain', representing Dhānyakaṭaka), and here would reign the king 等乘 *teng-ch'eng* ('Equal-ride', = Sadvāhana, = Sātavāhana); he would have a daughter called 增長, *tseng-chang*, 'Increase Prosperity', who would become ruler and receive homage from all the world.[44] The Tibetan version, which is evidently based on a variant text, declares that four hundred years after the Nirvāṇa, on the north bank of Sundarabhūti in a country called Rishila in south India, there would be born as a Licchavi, in the time of King Vipatticikitsaka, a monk called Nāga who would give his life for the Dharma. Tucci thought that this "Nāga" could not refer to Nāgārjuna.[45]

The *Mahāmeghasūtra* therefore offers us a "Nāga" and a "Nāgarāja," named in proximity to a prophecy about a Sātavāhana ruler at Dhānyakaṭaka. Most authorities have not been impressed by the text as evidence, but Candrakīrti's allusion to what appears to be the same work does suggest that, though garbled, it may provide early evidence of a tradition, strong in later centuries, that linked Nāgārjuna, the teacher of Madhyamaka, with Sātavāhana rulers in the south.

The reference in the Tibetan version to a woman later becoming a ruler has been seen as a reflection of the importance of royal women in the culture to which the original text belonged, and Lévi points to the prominence of women as donors to Buddhism at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa, where the Ikṣvāku dynasty ruled in the third century.[46]

Indian sources offer little from this time until about the eleventh century, when their distance from the origins of traditions about Nāgārjuna severely limits their usefulness.

The *Kathāsaritsāgara*, firstly, tells the story of King Long-lived, endowed with all gifts, whose wise minister, Nāgārjuna, of bodhisattva origin, was possessed of compassion, generosity and good conduct:

> *cirāyur nāmni nagare cirāyur nāma bhūpatiḥ*
> *pūrvaṃ cirāyur evāsīt ketanaṃ sarvasampadām*
> *tasya nāgārjuno nāma bodhisattvāṃśasaṃbhavaḥ*
> *dayālur dānaśīlaś ca mantri vijñānavān abhūt.*[47]

According to this story (which became popular in later writings, whatever its origin) Nāgārjuna had discovered the secret of immortality and shared it with his royal master; the two of them lived for many centuries, but ultimately a crown prince, greedy for the throne, tricked Nāgārjuna into placing himself in the prince's power and submitting to decapitation, and the grief-stricken king died soon after.[48] Here we observe Nāgārjuna the magician, the hero of many a legend in the Tibetan and Chinese stories of medieval times, and there is little here of historical significance besides a memory of the fame of Nāgārjuna.[49]

Kalhaṇa (twelfth century) offers a reference to Nāgārjuna as lord of the earth (*bhūmīśvaro*) in Kashmir at the time of Huṣka, Juṣka, and Kaniṣka, living in the grove of the six arhants (*ṣaḍarhadvana*):

> *athābhavan svanāmāṅkapuratrayavidhāyinaḥ*
> *huṣkajuṣkakaniṣkākhyās trayas tatraiva pārthivāḥ* 168
> *sa vihārasya nirmātā juṣko juṣkapurasya yaḥ*
> *jayasvāmipurasyāpi suddhadhīḥ samvidhāyakaḥ* 169
> *te turuṣkānvayodbhūtā api puṇyāśrayā nṛpāḥ*
> *śuṣkaletrādideśeṣu maṭhacaityādi cakrire* 170
> *prājye rājyakṣaṇe teṣāṃ prāyaḥ kaśmiramaṇḍalam*
> *bhojyam aste sma bauddhānāṃ pravrajyorjitatejasām* 171
> *tadā bhagavataḥ śākyasiṃhasya paranirvṛteḥ*
> *asmin mahīlokadhātau sārdhaṃ varṣaśatam hy agāt* 172
> *bodhisattvaś ca deśe 'sminn eko bhūmīśvaro 'bhavat*
> *sa ca nāgārjunaḥ śrīmān ṣaḍarhadvanasaṃśrayī* 173[50]

[38] See J. Burgess, *The Buddhist Stupas of Amarāvatī and Jaggayyapeta in the Krishna District, Madras Presidency* (reprint, Varanasi: Indological Book House, 1970).

[39] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, tr. E. B. Cowell and F. W. Thomas (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1897), 251f.

[40] Bāṇa, *The Harṣacarita of Bāṇabhaṭṭa, with Commentary of Śaṅkara*, ed. Kāśīnāth Pāṇdurang Parab and Śāstri Dhondo Paraśurām Vaze (Bombay: Tukaram Javaji, 1892), 282.

[41] D. Ruegg, "Le Dharmadhātustava de Nāgārjuna," 450; G. Tucci, "Animadversiones Indicae," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, n.s., 26 (1930): 144–47.

[42] P. Demiéville, "Sur un passage du *Mahāmeghasūtra*," appendix 2 of "Les versions chinoises du *Milindapañha*," *Bulletin de l'Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient* 24 (1924): 218–30.

[43] P. Demiéville, *Mahāmeghasūtra*, 227. "Supaya" in the text.

[44] Demiéville, *Mahāmeghasūtra*, 229; cf. K. Satchidananda Murty, *Nāgārjuna* (New Delhi: National Book Trust, 1971–79), 43–44; S. Lévi, "Kaniṣka et Sātavāhana," *Journal asiatique* (1936): 117; S. K. Pathak, "Life of Nāgārjuna (from the Pag-Sam-Jon-Zang)," *Indian Historical Quarterly* 30 (1954): 93–95.

[45] Demiéville, *Mahāmeghasūtra*, 118; Tucci, "Animadversiones," 146–47.

[46] Lévi, "Kaniṣka," 118–19.

[47] *Kathāsaritsāgara* 41.9–10, ed. Pandits Durgāprasād and Kāśīnāth Pāṇdurang Parab, 3rd ed., rev. by W. L. S. Pansikar (Bombay: Tukārām Jāvaji, 1915), 188.

[48] "Thus Nāgārjuna went to his fate, prevented by the gods from destroying death": *evaṃ nāgārjunārabdhaṃ martyānāṃ mṛtyunāśanam / na siṣṭhuṃ devatair yāvat so 'pi mṛtyuvaśaṃ gataḥ*, ibid., 189 (vs. 59).

[49] Karambelkar, "Problem," 27; cf. J. J. Speyer, *Studies in the Kathāsaritsāgara* (Wiesbaden: Sandig, 1968), 163.

[50] *Rājataraṅgiṇi*, ed. Pandeya Ramtej Shastri (Benares: Pandit Pustakalaya, 1960), 1: 168–73.

This tells us that Huṣka, Juṣka and Kaniṣka were three rulers over the three cities that bore their names; the pure-souled Juṣka founded a vihāra as well as Juskapura and Jayasvāmipura; these kings, although of Turkish descent, gave themselves to pious deeds, building in Śuskaletra and other places foundations such as monasteries and shrines; during their glorious reign Kashmir was mostly dedicated to the Buddhists, whose mendicant lifestyle enhanced their fame; at this period one hundred fifty years had passed since the Parinirvāṇa of the Buddha; and in this country a bodhisattva, Nāgārjuna, was the sole sovereign of the earth (*eko bhūmiśvaro*), dwelling in the Grove of the Six Arhats.

There has been some discussion of the meaning of this lordship,[51] which need not concern us. Nāgārjuna did not rule as a lord anywhere; possibly the allusion can be taken to refer to his spiritual eminence, but the character of the passage as a whole should warn us against treating it as historical chronicle based on secure information. If (as we must) we reject the information that at the time in question the Buddha had been dead for a hundred and fifty years, why should we cling to the contemporaneity of a "lord of the earth" Nāgārjuna with the Śaka kings named?

It is possible, indeed, to find historical referents for the kings named: Kaniṣka could be the rather shadowy Kaniṣka II, supposed to have been ruling forty-one years after the accession of the dynastic founder and patron of Buddhism, Kaniṣka I, and the other two kings named could be the former's contemporaries Huviṣka and Vaṣeṣka.[52] Scholars have debated the chronology of Nāgārjuna's life in relation to that of Kaniṣka I, whose reign in the northwest possibly began in A.D. 78;[53] however, there is little point in seeking to secure Nāgārjuna's chronology to another which is itself so insecure; the serious doubts about the historical career of any Kaniṣka II, and about the date of the reign of Kaniṣka I, make it unwise to rely heavily on the links suggested in Kalhaṇa's poem written a millennium later.

Two works which have the character of classical Mahāyāna texts, but may be spurious, are the *Mahābherisūtra* and the *Mahāmāyāsūtra*, both of which mention Nāgārjuna, but their historical value is dubious.[54]

A later source, in impure Sanskrit, much used by Tibetan writers in their compilations of Buddhist lore, was the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa*. It contains a spurious prophecy by the Buddha:

> *bodhiṃ prāpsyati sarvajñāṃ uttamārtham acintiyām*
> *caturthe varṣaśate prāpte nirvṛte mayi tathāgate*
> *nāgāhvayo nāma sa u bhikṣuḥ śāsane 'smin hite rataḥ*
> *muditāṃ bhūmilabdhas tu jīved varṣaśatāni ṣaṭ*
> *māyūri nāmato vidyā siddhā tasya mahātmanaḥ*
> *nānāśāstrārthudhārvarthaṃ niḥsvabhāvārthatattvavit*
> *sukhāvatyāṃ copapadyeta yadāsau tyaktakalebaraḥ*
> *so 'nupūrveṇa buddhatvaṃ niyataṃ samprapatsyate*[55]

Four hundred years after the Buddha's Nirvāṇa, there would live a monk named Nāga (*nāgāhvaya*) who would obtain the *muditābhūmi* and would live six hundred years; he would acquire the Mahāmayūrividyā and know the truth of non-substantiality (*niḥsvabhāvārthatattva*). He would go to the heaven Sukhāvatī on his death and in due course would certainly attain Buddhahood. The Tibetan version represents "Nāga" as *klu-shes-de-hbod*, the equivalent of "Nāgāhvaya," 'called Nāga'; according to Walleser the reference is definitely to Nāgārjuna, and this, he thinks, helps to validate the expression *nāgāhvaya* as a reference to Nāgārjuna where it also occurs in the *Laṅkāvatāra*.[56] It certainly appears plausible, given the reference to this Nāga's knowledge of the emptiness of things (*niḥsvabhāvārthatattvavit*), to take the passage as an allusion to Nāgārjuna the mādhyamika.

An eleventh-century work based on Indian travels, but not by an Indian, is the account of Al-Biruni (Alberuni), who mentions a famous alchemist named Nāgārjuna who lived a century before (i.e., in the tenth century); he came from Daihak near Somnath and was an expert in the science of *rasāyana* and used plants to promote health, longevity, and enhanced sexuality.[57] Reference to the context, which contains various stories of miracles that are repeated uncritically, does not inspire confidence in its historical value. V. W. Karambelkar attaches

[51] Reviewed by S. Lévi, "Kaniṣka," 119.

[52] K. Venkata Ramanan, *Nāgārjuna's Philosophy*, 28.

[53] See A. L. Basham, ed., *Papers on the Date of Kaniṣka* (Leiden: Brill, 1968); D. Shackleton Bailey, *Śatapañcāśatka of Mātṛceṭa* (Cambridge: C. U. P., 1951); and see other sources cited by D. Seyfort Ruegg, *The Literature of the Madhyamaka School*, 5, n. 11.

[54] *Mahābherisūtra*, cited by Buston, *History of Buddhism*, tr. E. Obermiller (Heidelberg, 1931–32), 129f.; T. Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India*, II (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1961), 204, n. 3; cf. Joshi, "Life and Times," 46; Murty, *Nāgārjuna*, 45 (these two texts, not mentioned in Śāntideva's *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, are possibly spurious); Ruegg, "Le Dharmadhātustava," 450.

[55] *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa*, part III, ed. T. Ganapati Sastri, Trivandrum Sanskrit Series, 84 (Trivandrum: Government Press, 1925), 616f.

[56] Walleser, "Life of Nāgārjuna," 439f.; however, Walleser emphasizes (p. 440) that the text is a late one and unreliable.

[57] Al-Biruni, *Alberuni's India: An Account*, tr. E. Sachau (Delhi: Chand, 1964), I: 188f.

weight to this evidence, although other authorities do not.[58] What we observe here is an early stage of the myth of Nāgārjuna the practitioner of wonderful arts.

Thus the evidence from India is disappointing. The stronger sense of history as a record of objective circumstances in China might be thought a more hopeful field to explore.

Kumārajīva, firstly, made translations of Buddhist texts very early in the fifth century. From him (whether as author or as translator) or from his disciples comes a short biography of Nāgārjuna, the *Long-shu p'u-sa chuan*, the substance of which is largely mythical, but does offer a chronology: "Since Nāgārjuna left the world up to the present, more than a hundred years have passed."[59] However, it is not clear whether these should be seen as words of Kumārajīva, or of an earlier work which he passed on, or of his disciples who edited the material he bequeathed them.[60]

One disciple of Kumārajīva was Seng-jui, who wrote a preface to the *Satyasiddhiśāstra*. This preface is now lost, but according to a passage quoted by Chi-tsang, Aśvaghoṣa was born 350 years after the Buddha's Nirvāṇa and Nāgārjuna was born "in the year 530"; it appears that Nāgārjuna's year is dated from Aśvaghoṣa's and thus comes 880 years after the Nirvāṇa.[61] What weight should be attached to the date thus derived (a pedantic calculation shows that it should be A.D. 244, not 243, as is usually advanced) is not clear, for we have no ground for believing that the Chinese possessed Indian records capable of supporting such a precise chronology.[62] As Lamotte acknowledges: "On n'echappe pas à l'impression que toutes ces datations relèvent de vues théoriques sur les étapes successives de la Bonne Loi et que, en chronologie absolue, leur valeur est plutôt faible."[63]

Perhaps the earliest solid piece of biographical information of value comes in the sixth century from the translator Paramārtha, who attests the connection between Nāgārjuna and a Sātavāhana ruler that in later writings was to be repeated over and over again.[64]

Hsüan-tsang, the famous seventh-century pilgrim, comes next. He visited a place which he identified as the capital of Kośala (i.e., Dakṣiṇakośala), the location of which has not been identified with certainty (it might have been in the area of Wairagarh or Bhandak[65]) and claimed that

> not far to the south of the city is an old *saṅghārāma*, by the side of which is a *stūpa* that was built by Aśokarāja. . . . Afterwards Nāgārjuna Bodhisattva (*Lung-men-p'u-sa*) dwelled in the *saṅghārāma*.[66]

Nāgārjuna had the friendship and patronage of the Sātavāhana king, who provided him with a residence. Nāgārjuna concocted medicines for longevity, through which he and the king lived for centuries until Nāgārjuna was decapitated; Hsüan-tsang offers a version of the story of Nāgārjuna's end mentioned above. This king is called So-to-p'o-ho, clearly intending the dynastic name Sātavāhana, as we saw earlier.[67]

Traveling three hundred *li* to the south-west, Hsüan-tsang came to *Po-lo-mo-lo-ki-li* (Bhramaragiri), the site of a great *vihāra* made by the king for Nāgārjuna by hollowing out the rock in five tiers. The exact location of this *vihāra* cannot easily be identified,[68] but the same recognizable monastery had already been described by

[58] Karambelkar, "Problem," 31–32; P. Kumar, tr., *Nāgārjuna's Yogaratnamālā* (Delhi: Nag Publishers, 1980), 18.

[59] T 2047, 185b 2–3, 186b, cited by E. Lamotte, *L'Enseignement de Vimalakīrti*, 76; cf. Walleser, "Life of Nāgārjuna," 444.

[60] J. W. de Jong, review of *Le Traité de la Grande vertu de sagesse de Nāgārjuna*, 105–6; on the evidence of Hui-yüan see Robinson, *Early Mādhyamika*, 22; cf. Murty, *Nāgārjuna*, 47.

[61] De Jong, review of *Traité*, 106.

[62] Ibid., 110f.; cf. Jan Yün-hua, "Nāgārjuna, One or More?" 148–49. The whole question of the date of the *mahāparinirvāṇa* is again wide open; see, for example, H. Bechert, "Die Lebenszeit des Buddha: Das älteste feststehende Datum der indischen Geschichte?" *Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen*, phil.-hist. Kl., 4 (1986): 129–84; and Bechert, ed., *The Dating of the Historical Buddha*, part 1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht), 1991.

[63] Lamotte, *Traité*, III: liii.

[64] J. W. de Jong, review of J. Hopkins and Lati Rimpoche, trs., *The Precious Garland and the Song of the Four Mindfulnesses* (London, 1975), in *Indo-Iranian Journal* 20 (1978): 137.

[65] It is not clear where the capital of this Kosala would have been. See J. Fergusson, "On Hiouen-Thsang's Journey from Patna to Bhallabhi," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, n.s., 6 (1875): 260; Dutt, "Nāgārjunikoṇḍa and Nāgārjuna," 639; S. Beal, Hsüan-tsang, *Si-Yu-Ki, Buddhist Records of the Western World*, 2 vols. (Boston: Osgood, 1885), II: 209n.

[66] S. Beal, *Si-Yu-Ki*, II: 210. On the Chinese transliteration of the name Nāgārjuna, see Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels*, 203.

[67] Beal, *Si-Yu-Ki*, 210–12; see p. 210 n. 71; cf. T. Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels*, II: 206–7, referring to the rendering of Sadvaha (= Sātavāhana) as *Yin-cheng*, 'Leading-right'.

[68] Beal, *Si-Yu-Ki*, 214, n. 80; cf. Karambelkar, "The Problem of Nāgārjuna," 23–24; J. Burgess, *The Buddhist Stūpas of Amarāvatī*, 6–7; Jan Yün-hua, "Nāgārjunakoṇḍa: Note on a New Reference from Chinese Source," *Journal of Indian History* 48.2 (1970): 415–26.

Fa-hsien in the fifth century,[69] and in the early eighth century a Korean pilgrim, Hui Ch'ao, passed the same way.[70] Different versions of the Chinese text call the monastery 黑峰, *hei feng* ('black peak') and 黑蜂, also pronounced *hei feng*, 'black bee', which as has been argued could represent the Sanskrit *bhramara*, epithet of the Śaivite goddess.[71] Some have thought that this monastery bestowed upon Nāgārjuna must have been at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa, but strictly speaking the distances and directions stated in the text do not allow us to place it so far south.[72]

The narrative of Hsüan-tsang's travels resumes with a record of his journey southwards to the Andhra country.[73] It is in this general area, of course, that in the second and third centuries, first, the Sātavāhanas at Dhānyakaṭaka and, then, the Ikṣvākus at Vijayapurī ruled at capital cities which could have been centers of patronage for celebrated Buddhist teachers. It is generally accepted that the site of Dhānyakaṭaka was adjacent to the ancient stūpa at Amarāvatī (where according to the much later Tibetan tradition Nāgārjuna made benefactions). There are problems in the reconstruction of the history of this area, which have been discussed elsewhere.[74]

Elsewhere Hsüan-tsang refers to Nāgārjuna as one of "four suns which illumined the world," along with Aśvaghoṣa, Āryadeva, and Kumāralabdha,[75] but it is not likely that this allusion can furnish any useful chronological information: the four suns did not shine at the same time.[76]

Here it is necessary to revert briefly to the question of Kaniṣka's relationship with Nāgārjuna, mentioned above, for Shohei Ichimura has recently appealed to it and to the "four suns" allusion in making his case that Nāgārjuna lived in western India from about A.D. 50 to about A.D. 150.[77] The case for this chronology rests essentially upon the evidence of Hsüan-tsang that Nāgārjuna was a contemporary of Aśvaghoṣa, the assumption that Aśvaghoṣa was a contemporary of Kaniṣka I, and the assumption that this Kaniṣka's reign was late in the first century.[78] The chronology of Kaniṣka, as noticed before, is notoriously problematic; so is the relationship of Nāgārjuna to Aśvaghoṣa. If we accept the poetic allusion to four suns as serious evidence that Nāgārjuna and Aśvaghoṣa were contemporaries, we must find better reasons for heeding it than the earlier evidence of Chi-tsang, according to which, of course, the two cannot be contemporary.

One other Chinese pilgrim, the late seventh-century traveler I-ching, shows an interest in Nāgārjuna, telling us for example of the master's reputed alchemical wizardry (prolonging his life by breathing water), and linking him with Aśvaghoṣa, Asaṅga, and Vasubandhu.[79]

[69] Fa-hsien, *The Travels of Fa-hsien (399–414 A.D.)*, tr. H. A. Giles (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1923), 62: "There is a country called Deccan, in which there is a monastery dedicated to Kasyapa Buddha, made by hollowing out a great rock." From the bottom up, these storeys were shaped like an elephant and with 500 chambers, like a lion and with 400, like a horse and with 300, like an ox and with 200, like a pigeon and with 100; a spring of water flowed from the top and was channeled around all the chambers on the way down; there were windows on all storeys. The whole area was now waste and uninhabited, not frequented by Buddhists; cf. Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels*, II: 207–8; Beal, *Si-Yu-Ki*, 214, n. 80.

[70] Jan Yün-hua, "Nāgārjuna, One or More?" 144 (citing W. Fuchs, 'Huei-ch'ao's Pilgerreise durch Nordwest-Indien und Zentral Asien', *Sitzungsberichten der preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, phil.-hist. Kl., 30 [1938]: 437ff, which was not accessible for this study).

[71] Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels*, II: 208; Beal, *Si-Yu-Ki*, 2: 214, n. 80.

[72] On the discussion of this "Black Peak" monastery, see I. W. Mabbett, "Dhānyakaṭaka," *South Asia* 16.2 (1993): 33f.

[73] Beal, *Si-Yu-Ki*, 217. Dhānyakaṭaka in ancient times was probably at Amarāvatī, but it is a puzzle why, in this case, Hsüan-tsang—usually so interested in the description of ancient and impressive Buddhist monuments—should omit any mention of the Amarāvatī stūpa. It is possible that, by the seventh century, the name Dhānyakaṭaka should have attached itself to another place, for the whole region was now a peripheral area, far from centers of power. See I. W. Mabbett, "Dhānyakaṭaka."

[74] Ibid.

[75] Beal, *Si-Yu-Ki*, 97f, 302f; T. Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels*, II: 104.

[76] S. Beal, tr., *The Life of Shaman Hwui Li* (Delhi: Academica Asiatica, 1973), 199; cf. M. Winternitz, *History of Indian Literature*, II: 342.

[77] Shohei Ichimura, "Reexamining The Period of Nāgārjuna," 9 (= 1078).

[78] Ichimura does not refer to the passage in the *Rājatarangiṇī*; he discusses links with Sātavāhana rulers, and suggests that Nāgārjuna wrote the *Suhṛllekha* for a Sātavāhana king and the *Ratnāvalī* for a Mahāyāna-supporting Śaka. (P. S. Sastri, on the other hand, has found reasons for supposing that Nāgārjuna wrote the *Ratnāvalī* for Gautamiputra Sātavāhana, supposed to be brahmanical: "Nāgārjuna and Āryadeva," 201f.).

[79] I-ching, *A Record of the Buddhist Religion as Practised in India and the Malay Archipelago (A.D. 671–695)*, tr. J. Takakusu (Oxford: O.U.P., 1896), 181.

Further, he quotes the *Suhṛllekha* at some length and identifies the friend to whom it was written as 市宾得迦, *shih-yin-te-chia*, EMC *zi^{h}-jin-tək-kia*, titled So-to-p'o-han-na (spelled as above, but in this text with *han* represented by 禪).[80] There has been much discussion of the proper Indian restoration of these names;[81] the latter is clearly Sātavāhana, while the former (variously taken to represent Śāntaka, Jantaka, Jayāndhra, etc.) could possibly be based on the common Sātavāhana name Śātakarṇi. We may note here that various forms of the name Śātakarṇi (used by many Sātavāhana rulers) occur in puranic sources, including notably Śāntikarṇi, along with such variants as Sāta, Sāti, Sada and Sātaka.[82]

These are the main relevant Chinese sources; Tibetan works constitute another category, but despite their importance for many aspects of Buddhist history they must be largely omitted from consideration here for reasons of space. They all stand at a substantial distance in time from the Nāgārjuna I whose biography is here in view, and the evidence that they contain must be very indirect. A more substantial review would need to take account of the writings of Buston (1290–1364),[83] 'Gos-lo-tsa-ba gZon-du-dpal,[84] Tāranātha,[85] and Sumpa.[86] Deserving of brief comment is a work by Man-luñs, who lived in the thirteenth century and described a magnificent stūpa in Dhānyakaṭaka where the Buddha was supposed to have preached. This picked up a tradition given currency in Tibet by the *Kālacakra Tantra*; Man-luñs took the further step of associating Nāgārjuna with construction work at Dhānyakaṭaka: temples to the northwest and southwest of the stūpa are attributed to the benefaction of Nāgārjuna. This would be important if the stūpa described by Man-luñs could be identified with one that actually existed (such as the stūpa at Amarāvatī), particularly since the author claims to have been to India and seen what he describes. Nevertheless, the detailed description that he gives appears to be a fanciful exercise, partly inspired by the *Kālacakra Tantra*, and cannot with confidence be attached to any known historical site. There are serious objections to any identification, including any along the Krishna River.[87]

This summary omits the many references to Nāgārjuna as a *mahāsiddha* who accumulated an impressive array of spells and powers, and who figures in many a list of past tantric masters, from which it would probably be vain to attempt any serious reconstruction of his biography. Most of the colorful and entertaining parts of the Nāgārjuna evidence, unfortunately, must be omitted from this study.

In many respects, the later traditions about a tantric Nāgārjuna seem to represent a different person, and many have thought that the historical basis for the tantric legend must have lain in some second individual who lived long after the mādhyamika master. For a number of scholars, the solution has seemed to be that two (or more) people called Nāgārjuna, one of them a tantric *mahāsiddha*, have become confused in Buddhist tradition.[88]

A variety of alchemical and medical treatises—not just tantric works—have been attributed to Nāgārjuna, and some have been ready to attribute them to the mādhyamika philosopher,[89] while others have considered

[80] I-ching, *A Record*, 158–62.

[81] Restored as "Jantaka" by Beal, but see de Jong, review of *The Precious Garland*, 136–39 (particularly n. 18). See also Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels*, II: 207; Lévi, "Kaniṣka et Sātavāhana," 107 (reading 'Jantaka'); S. Beal, "Some Remarks on the Suhṛllekha or Friendly Communication of Nāgārjuna Bodhisattva to King Shatopohanna," *Indian Antiquary* 16 (1887): 169–72; Joshi, "Life and times," 17; M. Walleser, "Die Lebenszeit des Nāgārjuna," *Zeitschrift für Buddhismus* 6 (1924–25): 95–103, 237–42.

[82] K. Gopalachari, *Early History of the Andhra Country* (Madras: Madras U.P.), 38, 47.

[83] Buston, *History of Buddhism*.

[84] G. N. Roerich, *The Blue Annals* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1979).

[85] Tāranātha, *History of Buddhism in India*; *The Seven Instruction Lineages*, tr. D. Templeman (Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1983).

[86] S. K. Pathak, "Life of Nāgārjuna from the *Pag Sam Jon Zang*," *Indian Historical Quarterly* 30 (1954): 93–95; cf. Walleser, "Life of Nāgārjuna," 422.

[87] See A. Macdonald, "Le Dhānyakaṭaka de Man-Luñs guru," *Bulletin de l'Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient* 57 (1970): 169–213, who suggests (p. 187) that the description of the stūpa is at least in part influenced not by what was there to be seen but by the *Kālacakra Tantra*'s versions of maṇḍalas of Vajradhātu, Dharmadhātuvāgīśvara, etc.

[88] Joshi, "Life and Times," 15–16; Karambelkar, "Problem," 28–29; Dutt, "Nāgārjunikoṇḍa and Nāgārjuna," 636–69.

[89] The *Yogaratnamālā* details experiments in chemistry; its translator, Kumar, argues *contra* Roy that there is evidence of chemical knowledge at the time of the original Nāgārjuna: P. Kumar, ed., *Nāgārjuna's Yogaratnamālā*, 18–19. Murty, *Nāgārjuna*, 58, thinks that the mādhyamika philosopher might have been also the author of such works: he "dabbled (in alchemy), just as the philosopher Berkeley messed about with tar-water and wrote on its virtues."

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that perhaps as many as four historical individuals, living at different times, came to be confused.[90]

The argument for two (or more) Nāgārjunas is basically that the *œuvre* and the traditions credited to Nāgārjuna point to a mādhyamika *ācārya* some time in the first three centuries A.D. and to a tantric *mahāsiddha*, an adept in charms and spells, who would probably have lived later, when tantra flourished.[91] The tantric Nāgārjuna can be identified as the founder of the *Guhyasamāja* system, as the sixteenth *mahāsiddha*, and as the disciple of Saraha or Rāhula;[92] it has been pointed out that the *Guhyasamāja* concepts do not date from before Dharmakirti and have a basis in Yogācāra, not Madhyamaka, theory.[93]

There are difficulties with the case for plural Nāgārjunas; we have to decide which of the facts alleged by tradition about Nāgārjuna belong to one, or to another, or to both, or all by sheer coincidence; and in many cases the decision must be arbitrary. Nevertheless, most scholars have accepted that there must have been more than one Nāgārjuna behind the traditions. The argument of Jan Yün-hua that, after all, there was only one Nāgārjuna[94] is therefore all the more striking.

Jan Yün-hua offers several types of evidence which he says suggest that there was no later Nāgārjuna. These are directed against specific claims for the existence of a tantric (or a medical) Nāgārjuna in some particular later century.[95] However, Jan does not discuss the actual authorship of most of the various later texts attributed by tradition to Nāgārjuna—a discussion which is required if the case for the existence of no more than one Nāgārjuna is to be sustained.

Jan Yün-hua's arguments are salutary in casting doubt on the too-facile theories which seek to identify some particular Nāgārjuna II (or III, or IV) in some particular later century.

What we need to recognize here is that there are different grades of existence. We should heed the lessons of Madhyamaka logic: that a later Nāgārjuna should exist, and that a later Nāgārjuna should not exist, are not the only possibilities. There are several grades worth distinguishing:

(a) being Nāgārjuna originally;
(b) taking the name Nāgārjuna upon re-ordination;
(c) coming to be seen as a reincarnation of Nāgārjuna;
(d) writing a book which contributes to a tradition that looks back to Nāgārjuna, and which subsequently comes to be attributed to Nāgārjuna;
(e) not being Nāgārjuna in any sense at all.

Later Nāgārjunas could indeed come into existence, in some sense. After all, there could be two Aśvaghoṣas, two Sarahas or Rāhulabhadras, even two Āryadevas and two Vimuktisenas. Tucci points out that, particularly in the tantric tradition, the repetition of names was specially liable to occur. Many siddhas might be seen as incarnations of a single person; further, many Tibetans would take new names upon initiation into new or different schools.

> This implies that some masters of the *Siddha-sampradāya* considered themselves or were considered by their disciples as the manifestation (Tib. *rnam a'prul*) of the first ācāryas . . . and were given the same name. This fact explains quite well the contamination which we may trace between the biographical accounts of the older masters as given in the Chinese sources and those preserved in the Tibetan tradition.[96]

This much, of course, concerns Tibetan teachers, not Indian. But there is no reason why it should not apply to the later, tantric, forms of Indian Buddhism as well.

[90] Winternitz, *History*, II: 343–44, n. 2; cf. Karambelkar, "Problem"; Tucci, "Animadversiones," 143. The centuries of life attributed to him and the succession of careers in different parts of India could, suggests Ruegg, represent the conflation of several different historical individuals: Ruegg, "Dharmadhātustava," 452–53.

[91] Pathak, "Life," 93–95; Joshi, "Life and Times," 13; K. R. Subramanian, *Buddhist Remains in Andhra* (Madras: Diocesan Press, 1932), 57, n. 2.

[92] Joshi, "Life and Times," 19.

[93] Tucci, "Animadversiones," 143f. The date of Dharmakirti is itself not certain.

[94] Jan Yün-hua, "Nāgārjuna, One or More?"

[95] For example, (1) the failure of Hsüan-tsang to mention a second, tantric, Nāgārjuna flourishing in India at the time of his own visit (as postulated for a Nāgārjuna II by N. Dutt); (2) the existence of medical treatises in China attributed to Bodhisattva Nāgārjuna (*Lung-shu p'u-sa*) referred to in the seventh century by the *Sui shu* (too early for the alleged medical Nāgārjuna in the eighth century or any later); and (3) the eighth-century master Amoghavajra, who claimed that his instruction lineage passed through Vajrasattva, Bodhisattva Nāgārjuna, Ācārya Nāgabodhi, and Ācārya Vajrabodhi, who was Amoghavajra's own teacher (which would imply, since all these were supposed to live for centuries, that the tantric Nāgārjuna existed in the early centuries A.D. and thus might not be different from Nāgārjuna I).

[96] Tucci, "Animadversiones," 140.

Few of the Sanskrit sources of Tibetan traditions are preserved, or we would be in a much better position to seek pathways by which genuine historical knowledge was transmitted. But a short Sanskrit work recording alleged teacher lineages, found in Nepal by Tucci, constitutes good evidence that, in the Sanskrit tradition also, teachers in a lineage could be regarded as reincarnations of earlier masters. The work in question[97] shows that one master, Nāgārjuna, was held to be re-embodied in the persons of a number of later siddhas—Dāmodara, Advayavajra, and Ratnamati. Further, it shows that teachers could take new names on being initiated into different schools.

The tendency here attested may have begun quite early, and it is not surprising that there should be confusing and discrepant traditions, more or less worthless for the purposes of true chronology, describing the place of Nāgārjuna in one instruction lineage or another.

There was very possibly, then, one original Nāgārjuna, but to him was added a legend which ramified. This legend, in turn, inspired the adoption of the name of Nāgārjuna by many later texts written at different times, and likely also by some later teachers in the tantric tradition. In seeking the historical reality of these texts and teachers, therefore, we are not looking for some particular individual who was "the tantric Nāgārjuna," or perhaps "the medical Nāgārjuna," or "the alchemical Nāgārjuna," who happened to have the same name. We are looking for the multiform particular manifestations of a single legend. These later manifestations need not be embodied in any new authentic Nāgārjuna. They may be embodied in different ways of using the name.

It is necessary to recognize the importance of this perspective. There are implications here for our understanding of Indian views of authorship and tradition, of truth and its expression. It may be appropriate, as a comment on the world view that is here elicited, to cite some comments by Arthur Waley about authorship which, though they concern not India but China, may bear pondering nevertheless:

> Thus people in early China were used to regarding books as records of traditions. . . . When real authorship began writers should give their books the appearance of being records of ancient things, rather than present their ideas as new and personal discoveries. This was as natural and as inevitable as that the first railway carriages should imitate stage coaches. These early products of authorship were not, strictly speaking, what Western bibliographers call pseudepigraphs. No pretence was made that the books in question were written by the Ancients (though this was often believed in after ages by people who could only think in terms of modern authorship). It was merely pretended that what was now set down had once been taught by such or such an Ancient. Had this method not been adopted the people could not have been induced to read the books, any more than travellers could have been persuaded to enter a railway carriage if it had not looked something like a stage coach.[98]

* * *

There had to be a single historical figure at the origin of the whole process, and he, we need not doubt, was the author of the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikās*. What evidence about him emerges?

The link with the Sātavāhana dynasty is probably the most striking feature. De Jong suggests that Paramārtha's reference to the connection, in the sixth century, may be the first occurrence.[99] Hsüan-tsang's *So-to-p'o-ho* and I-ching's *So-to-p'o-han-na* evidently represent it phonetically, and the former's 引正 *Yin-cheng*, 'Leading-right', conveys the sense of *Sad-vāha*. (The actual etymology of the dynastic name, which is Sanskritized from a local language and has been argued by some to represent a trace of a horse cult, does not matter; it is the way the name *Sātavāhana* struck its hearers that counts.) The Tibetan *bDe.Spyod* can be interpreted similarly, though the interpretation is conjectural: the first element means 'happy, good' (= *sat*), and the second 'walking, conducting oneself' (= *vāhana*).

Which Sātavāhana ruler, if any, is most likely to have been Nāgārjuna's patron? Nāgārjuna's relationship to early Mahāyāna literature requires that we should look at the first three centuries A.D. In the course of this period, Sātavāhana kings lost their early dominions in the west and finished as lords of the lower Krishna region. The chronology of the dynasty, which must be reconstructed from fragmentary epigraphic records and implausible puranic lists, is far from clear, and different authorities differ widely in the dates they suggest for the reigns of rulers; there would be little point in assigning precise dates here.

[97] Tucci, "Animadversiones" ("A Sanskrit Biography of the Siddhas and some Questions Connected with Nāgārjuna"), 138–55; text at pp. 148–55.

[98] A. Waley, tr., *The Way and its Power* (New York: The Grove Press, 1958), 102–3.

[99] De Jong, review of *Precious Garland*, 137.

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Gautamīputra Śātakarṇi is likely to have reigned around the beginning of the second century;[100] it is said in a Nasik inscription that his horses drank from the three oceans,[101] which recalls the allusion to the Sātavāhana friend of Nāgārjuna in the *Harṣacarita* (noticed above) as "lord of the three oceans," an epithet, which has been thought appropriate to a ruler who had an empire in the west as well as the east, if we see in it an exaggerated claim to control the eastern, southern and western coasts of the Deccan. P. S. Sastri has argued that the *Ratnāvali* (assuming it was written by Nāgārjuna) contains references to the vilification of Mahāyāna and appears to be written to a monarch who had reverted to brahmanism; since Gautamīputra Śātakarṇi is referred to in a Nasik inscription as *ekabrāhmaṇa*, this king could be he.[102] (This argument, of course, depends upon the conjunction of several hypotheses.)

Several other authorities have argued for Puḷumāvi II (late second century) or Yajña Śrī Śātakarṇi (variously dated in the later second century or at the turn of the third[103]), but the latter of these is the more favored candidate.[104]

Vijaya Śrī Śātakarṇi, at the beginning of the third century or in its early part, is not frequently given any preference,[105] but it deserves to be noticed that Vijaya is known from an inscription on a limestone pillar recording a Buddhist endowment near Vijayapurī (as it was to become), in the Nāgārjunakoṇḍa valley.[106] H. Sarkar was led by his archaeological researches at Amarāvatī and Nāgārjunakoṇḍa to propose a revision of the late Sātavāhana chronology: the inscriptions of the last three rulers, Vijaya Śātakarṇi, Caṇḍaśrī, and Puḷumāvi III, are in different places, and they may have ruled concurrently from different capitals; Vijaya (possibly r. 203–9) could have been the real founder of Vijayapurī, which after his defeat became the Ikṣvāku capital.[107] (His chronology, however, must be acknowledged to be speculative.)

This leads naturally to a consideration of the connection between Nāgārjuna and Śrī Parvata—a connection widely enough claimed for him in the later sources (such as the Tibetan writers and the *Rasaratnākara*[108]).

The epigraphy of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa identifies a Śrī Parvata at that site, consisting at least of an eminence on a spur projecting into the valley (and possibly more generally of the surrounding heights);[109] some have considered that the name designated the whole Nallamallai range, the hills which surround the Nāgārjunakoṇḍa valley and extend upstream, to include Śrī Śailam (itself sometimes later called Śrī Parvata[110]). I. K. Sarma has made a study of the toponym Śrī Parvata, and according to him it is clear that in Ikṣvāku times at least it designated specifically the hill in the Nāgārjunakoṇḍa valley, though it may subsequently have come to be used more generally.[111]

So, on the evidence reviewed above, it is difficult to choose between the region called "Dakṣiṇakośala" and the Krishna valley heartland of the latter Sātavāhana kingdom (supported by the references to Śrī Parvata and the Sātavāhanas).

Perhaps we need not choose. The two areas are close enough together for us to conceive of a famous Buddhist teacher moving freely between them; perhaps, for example, he gained fame in Dakṣiṇakośala and traveled to the Krishna area (perhaps to Nāgārjunakoṇḍa) to receive patronage from a ruler there.

There is certainly evidence of Buddhist settlement at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa predating the establishment there of the Ikṣvāku capital, and it is probably here that we should look for the home of the Aparaśaila sect for whose benefit, in the reign of the Ikṣvāku monarch Māṭharīputra Vīrapuruṣadatta, there was erected the *mahācaitya*, a

[100] The last quarter of the first century is another possibility; see K. Venkata Ramanan, *Nāgārjuna's Philosophy*, 27.

[101] *Epigraphia Indica* 1905–6: 61; cf. H. N. Sastri, *The Philosophy of Nāgārjuna as Contained in the Ratnāvali* (Calcutta: Saraswat Library, 1977), 11–12.

[102] P. S. Sastri, "Nāgārjuna and Āryadeva," 193–202.

[103] Murty, *Nāgārjuna*, 67.

[104] For Winternitz (*History*, II: 347), influenced by Tāranātha's claim that Nāgārjuna was born in the time of Kaniṣka, Yajña Śrī (whose reign Winternitz dates to 166–96) seems right. J. Burgess favors Śrī Yajña partly on the strength of his reading of I-ching's *Shih-yin-te-chia*, though adding that Puḷumāvi III (dated by him to 215–20 A.D.) is just as likely: Burgess, *The Buddhist Stupas*, 8; cf. Kumar, *Yogaratnamālā*, 23–24.

[105] M. Walleser, "Die Lebenszeit des Nāgārjuna," 100–103, is led by his (in fact implausible) restoration of *Jayāndhra* from I-ching's *Shih-yin-te-chia* to favor Vijaya.

[106] H. Sarkar and B. N. Misra, *Nāgārjunakoṇḍa* (Calcutta: Krishna Murthy, 1966), 74.

[107] H. Sarkar, "The Nāgārjunakoṇḍa Phase of the Lower Krishna Valley Art: A Study Based on Epigraphical Data," in *Indian Epigraphy: Its Bearing on the History of Art*, ed. F. Asher and G. S. Gai (New Delhi, 1985), 30.

[108] Joshi, "Life and Times," 16–17; Bailey, *Śatapañcāśatka*, 7; Walleser, "Life of Nāgārjuna," 430; Lévi, "Kaniṣka et Sātavāhana," 106.

[109] J. Vogel, "Prakrit Inscriptions from a Buddhist Site at Nāgārjunikoṇḍa," *Epigraphia Indica* 20 (1929): 22.

[110] Murty, *Nāgārjuna*, 62.

[111] I. K. Sarma, *Śrī Parvata* (unpublished MS, 1989).

dhātugarbha, which must have contributed to the celebrity of the site in the Buddhist world, while the Pūrvaśaila sect had long been established in places further east, primarily at Amarāvatī.

Now, it is possible to indicate a chain of circumstantial connections fastening Nāgārjuna to the Nāgārjunakoṇḍa-Amarāvatī region in late Sātavāhana (or possibly Ikṣvāku) times; it needs to be emphasized at once, though, that the point of this exercise is to show, not that such a theory is correct, but that no others are better. The links are as follows. Despite the austere rationalism of the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikās* and the other philosophical works, Nāgarjuna's *Dharmadhātustava*, if correctly attributed to him, represents a devotional strain of Buddha worship, in which, as Ruegg argues, one can see elements of the *tathāgatagarbha* doctrine.[112] The *tathāgatagarbha* doctrine was emerging in association with devotional Buddhism. Elements of it have been discerned in the *Śrīmālāsūtra*, which has been tentatively attributed to the Buddhists of Ikṣvāku Nāgārjunakoṇḍa, partly because of the active role of women as Buddhist donors there and the importance of the ideal woman portrayed in the *Śrīmālāsūtra*.[113] Some of the monasteries of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa, according to H. Sarkar, represent the early influence of devotional religion with the incorporation of stūpas inside *vihāra* enclosures.[114] Nāgārjuna is widely held to have resided at Śrī Parvata for at least a part of his career, and there was a Śrī Parvata at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa. The Pūrvaśaila sect flourished in the Sātavāhana dominions in Andhra, particularly at Amarāvatī, and Candrakīrti in his *Madhyamakāvatāra* cites verses described as "following the Pūrvaśailas," which indicate the influence of Prajñāpāramitā ideas and have been associated by La Vallée Poussin with the emergence in the south of the *dharmadhātugarbha* doctrine.[115] The association of these elements is obviously inconclusive; but it makes as much sense as the other theories that have been advanced about Nāgārjuna.

At this point we can return to the question who was the "Sātavāhana" ruler who was Nāgārjuna's friend and patron.

In the first place, we must not overlook the possibility that the name "Sātavāhana," so familiar in the Nāgārjuna legend, came to be attached by posterity to some shadowy successor, not an actual Sātavāhana, who ruled in a part of the area whose history was made glorious chiefly by its association with the imperial Sātavāhanas. It is upon this supposition that one could cling to the Nāgārjunācārya of the Jaggayyapeta inscription, which has not so far been allowed to date before the fifth century and points to a fourth- or fifth-century date for Nāgārjuna. The supposition would also help us to deal with the claim made in the biography of Nāgārjuna attributed (albeit on grounds which we have seen to be insecure) to Kumārajīva: "Since Nāgārjuna left the world up to the present, more than a hundred years have passed"—which would point to a late third or possibly early fourth century sponsor for Nāgārjuna's activities.

Alternatively, we should look for this sponsor among the later Sātavāhanas, preferably a very late one if we are persuaded that the relevant developments in Buddhist doctrine are to be found among the *caitya* sects (primarily the Pūrvaśailas and Aparaśailas) in the late second and third centuries. Vijaya Śrī Śātakarṇi deserves to be considered more favorably than he has been in the past, considering that he was responsible for Buddhist endowments in the Nāgārjunakoṇḍa valley and has been taken to have established his capital there early in the third century; indeed, there is no reason why Nāgārjuna should not have begun his career as a royal protégé under Vijaya and subsequently lived under the Ikṣvākus.[116] The fact that Vijaya reigned for only a short time, while the royal patron of legend lived for several centuries, is of course irrelevant; we are not looking for a ruler who lived for several centuries. We are looking only for a ruler who might have been described by so many different sources in later times as a Sātavāhana (whether he was one or not).

What this enquiry shows is that, however inadequate the evidence for an original mādhyamika Nāgārjuna I may be, it enshrines memories of a real historical person.

[112] Ruegg, "Le Dharmadhātustava," 448–71.

[113] A. Wayman and H. Wayman, trs., *The Lion's Roar of Queen Śrīmālā: A Buddhist Scripture on the Tathāgatagarbha Theory* (New York: Columbia U.P., 1974); see the introduction.

[114] H. Sarkar, *Studies in Early Buddhist Architecture of India* (Delhi: Archaeological Survey of India, 1966), 78.

[115] L. de La Vallée Poussin, "Notes de bibliographie bouddhique," *Mélanges chinois et bouddhiques* 1 (1931): 402.

[116] Some scholars have been inclined to accept that Nāgārjuna may have lived under the Ikṣvākus, whether or not they thought he began his career under an earlier dynasty. Longhurst half-whimsically questioned whether the broken-off head of a Nāgārjunakoṇḍa statue, portraying a venerable capped figure, might not represent the master: A. H. Longhurst, "Excavations at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa," *Archaeological Survey of India Annual Report, 1927–28*, 113–21; K. S. Murty, *Nāgārjuna*, 69, refers to the discovery at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa in 1938 of a *pūrnakumbha* containing only two small teeth, which some considered to be relics of the great Ācārya. However intriguing, these are both guesses.

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The story is quite different when we seek facts about any subsequent Nāgārjuna. There is an important methodological point to be made here. If we assume that some particular later Nāgārjuna existed, about whom some fact is treated as given (for example, that he was an alchemist), we can treat certain writings as giving information about him; however, if we do not make such an assumption, the writings are not independently capable of constituting good evidence for his existence. That is, the object of our quest may itself be an artifact of the quest (*māyā* or *gandharvanagara*, so to speak). We must give proper weight to the default hypothesis that the association of the name Nāgārjuna with a profusion of tantric and quasi-scientific texts is a demonstration of the absorptive power of the legend originating in a single historical Nāgārjuna, the author of Madhyamaka.

MR. FIVE DIPPERS OF DRUNKENVILLE: THE REPRESENTATION OF ENLIGHTENMENT IN WANG JI'S DRINKING POEMS

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This essay proposes that the drinking poems by Wang Ji (590–644) do not simply chronicle the personal, heavy-drinking habits of this late Sui and early Tang poet, nor do they imitate in a conventional manner the drinking poems of Wang Ji's Wei-Jin models, most notably Ruan Ji and Tao Qian. Rather, in Wang Ji's imagination, drunkenness was a metaphor for the enlightened man's perception of fundamental philosophical ideas in the texts of *Laozi* and *Zhuangzi*—that is, the ever-changing course of the Way and the illusory nature of knowledge. Indeed, using Wang Ji's drinking poems, the "Biography of Mr. Five Dippers" and "The Story of Drunkenville," as guides, we discover that he consistently posits an analogous relationship between, on the one hand, the contrasting experiences of drunkenness and sobriety, and on the other hand the enlightened man's perception of the unknowable Way.

I

IF THERE IS ONE THING for which the early Tang poet Wang Ji 王績 (590–644) is famous it is his own heavy drinking. Over thirty-five percent of the works in his five-*juan* collection refer to his fondness for wine, and the proportion is even greater (fifty percent) in the abridged three-*juan* collection.[1] Unfortunately, all too often the consequence of such a reputation has been for readers to undervalue Wang Ji's poetic achievements with dismissive labels like "drunken poet" and "tippler hermit."

We can concede, of course, that Wang Ji's drinking inspired much of his poetry;[2] but at the same time we must remember how pervasively wine drinking had been employed, for centuries before Wang Ji, as a literary motif to express particular sets of ideas and emotions. As students of Chinese literary history are well aware, at the end of the Later Han and the early Wei-Jin period, especially, a call to drink often followed a poet's melancholy contemplation on the shortness and fragility of human life. Drunkenness was depicted as a comfort to mind and soul, a means to forget one's sufferings and to enjoy life in the moment. Later, Tao Qian 陶潛 (365–427) gave a philosophical significance to this theme, by portraying himself as a retired scholar in the country, whose blissful intoxication represented not only a comfort for sorrows, but a state of personal freedom from the bondage of the mundane world.

Wang Ji's self-portrayal as a drunken recluse also recalls the eccentric behavior of several Wei-Jin literati, as reported in works such as the *Shishuo xinyu* 世說新語, and, as well, the philosophy of Tao Qian's drunken farmer-scholar. However, Wang Ji used the materials of literary tradition for quite new purposes and, in consequence, his drinking poems have not been adequately understood. As I shall argue in this essay, while Wang Ji regularly invokes the famous drinkers and drinking poems of the past, he seldom attributes to himself their conventional motives for getting drunk. His drinking poems do not serve either to express or to drown personal despair or frustration. Instead, as we shall see,

[1] The original collection of Wang Ji's works, *Wang Ji ji* 王績集 in five *juan*, was compiled shortly after Wang Ji's death by an associate named Lü Cai 呂才 (600–665). About a hundred or so years later, Lu Chun 陸淳 (ob. 805) abridged Lü Cai's *Wang Ji ji* into a three-*juan* version, entitled *Donggaozi ji* 東皋子集. Lu Chun's edition represents slightly less than half of the works included in the first collection. As far as we know, Lü Cai's original edition remained in obscurity until 1987, when Han Lizhou 韓理洲 published a critical edition of the five-*juan* version, *Wang Wugong wenji* 王無功文集 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji, 1987). All reference to Wang Ji's works are to this edition (hereafter *Wenji*), unless noted otherwise.

[2] See Lü Cai's preface to *Wang Ji ji*, for an account of Wang Ji's expertise in wine-related matters, and of his intemperate hibacity. In several personal letters, Wang Ji also writes openly about his heavy drinking; see for example, in *Wenji*, "Da Cishi Du Zhisong shu" (134–35), "Da Chushi Feng Zihua shu" (147–50), and "Da Cheng Daoshi shu" (157–59).

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that biographers could invent a genealogy. And invent it they did. The Yoshida moniker, derived from his family background (the Urabe had hereditary posts at the Yoshida shrine), but not, as was often averred, from any record of his residence, associated him with a site in northeast Kyoto that could be construed in connection with the Yoshida Shinto sect, or simply taken as a sign of reclusion in the capital. Tales of Kenkō the spy for the restoration government of Go-Daigo could be used to put a loyalist spin on his work for the Northern court line during the Nanbokuchō period.

Overall, then, a variety of factors contributed to the suitability of *Tsurezuregusa* for the role of Great Book, many of them only loosely related to the text itself. Looking back over the attempts to enlist *Tsurezuregusa* as a source-book for various classes and movements, especially in the seventeenth century, we may be horrified or at least bemused by Kenkō's new champions and their often narrow-minded readings. When viewed as the product of the foremost aesthetician of *mujō*, Kenkō's text is a constantly changing kaleidoscope of fragments. It is rhetorically constructed to unsettle, and to make the reader write across its gaps. The reader thereby enacts the instability and impermanence of the constructs in this world. In this sense, Tokugawa appropriations were as much responding to the power and flexibility of the original as controlling it for their own purposes. The multifarious readings provide, if nothing else, proof that Kenkō's strategy worked on one level long after the audience ceased to be mainly Buddhist poet-priests with empathy for such an experience. From the contortions and apologies of these later readers, it is obvious that each had difficulty pinning the text down; further, the varied readings show that the text could not be reified into a single canonical version. And that does much to account, however paradoxically, for the fact that *Tsurezuregusa* was able to capture a top niche in the canon, for it accommodates not only the passing fashions of thought and ideology, but also the Japanese taste for passages, for process, and for indeterminacy in its aesthetic monuments.

ON A BARE BRANCH: BASHŌ AND THE *HAIKAI* PROFESSION

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Matsuo Bashō's decision to leave his burgeoning practice as a "marker" in Nihonbashi in the winter of 1680 and move across the river to take up a more solitary and frugal life in Fukagawa has always mystified scholars. Most see his act as evidence of a new "seriousness" of purpose, a desire to pursue spiritual rather than material goals. However, when viewed as a professional choice, Bashō's move was a precedented act with implications readily understandable to those in the world of *haikai* society. That he stopped working as a "marker" did not mean that he stopped practicing his profession. Indeed, it is argued here, his action was as an instance of what those in the highest ranks of a profession are always wont to do: to test their competence in a wider arena, and by so doing to claim a transcendent status for themselves and their occupations.

To Margaret . . . the station of King's Cross had always suggested Infinity.
E. M. Forster, *Howard's End*

MANY THINGS ABOUT THE CAREER of Matsuo Bashō seem remarkable. Not the least of these is his decision in the winter of 1680, at the age of only thirty-seven, to abandon his literary practice in Nihonbashi and move across the river to Fukagawa, literally opting out of *haikai* "high society" in favor of a life both less conspicuous and less materially prosperous. But should we take that act truly to signify Bashō's realization that, in the words of Ueda Makoto, fame "was not what he wanted"—especially when we remember that fame was what he got?[1] In this paper I will attempt to think through this question by examining Bashō not merely as a poet, in the inevitably romantic sense of that appellation, but as a *haikai* professional.[2] Among other things, this may help us to understand some of his activities—particularly his activities after 1680—in new and interesting ways.

But what does it mean to see Bashō as a professional? A useful approach to that question may be to look at the careers of two earlier poets, both of whom prefigure Bashō in some ways. The first, Shōtetsu (1381–1459), had no direct, documentable influence on Bashō's work, while the second, Inō Sōgi (1421–1502), was clearly a model to whom Bashō looked for instruction.[3] Both, however, affected Bashō in the way their own professional acts affected subsequent literary institutions. More than in the texts we now refer to as their "work," then, they, and countless others like them, affected Bashō in his approach to his literary *practice*—a word whose

[1] Ueda Makoto, *Bashō and His Interpreters: Selected Hokku with Commentary* (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 1992), 53.

[2] I have found the following helpful in thinking through the question of how the term "professional" might be conceptualized when applied to late medieval and early modern Japan: Magali Sarfatti Larson, *The Rise of Professionalism: A Sociological Analysis* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: Univ. of California Press, 1977); Michael Burrage and Rolf Torstendahl, *Professions in Theory and History: Rethinking the Study of the Professions* (London: Sage Publications, 1990); Samuel Weber, *Institution and Interpretation* (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1987); Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, tr. Gino Raymond and Matthew Adamson (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1991); idem, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, tr. Richard Nice (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1984).

[3] Bashō's consciousness of Sōgi as a model is apparent in his famous hokku:

To grow old is enough—
and then to have to watch showers
from Sōgi's hut.

and from references in his travel records. See below.

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[3] Bashō's consciousness of Sōgi as a model is apparent in his famous hokku:

affiliations to other professional discourses I intend at least provisionally to invoke.

* * *

As is the case with many other professional artists of the late medieval age, Shōtetsu began his working life as a monk, being placed in a Nara monastery while still in his mid-teens by his father. Since the literary and clerical fields clearly shared a disciplinary border in late medieval Japan, however, it should surprise no one that in his early twenties he decided to pursue poetry as a vocation. Despite occasional clerical disparagements of poetry as "wild words and fancy speech," Buddhist temples, especially major Zen temples such as Tōfukuji, where Shōtetsu served as a scribe for some years beginning in 1414, were literary enclaves. The progression from cleric to poet, albeit often depicted as a transgression by religious institutions, had become a common professional transition long before Shōtetsu's time and would continue to be so in the future.

When Shōtetsu made the decision to pursue poetry as his livelihood, that is, to become "a specialist who lives from his work,"[4] he went through the standard motions, including rites of passage. First, he pursued training under two recognized "masters" of the *uta* form: the warrior-poet Imagawa Ryōshun (1326–1420) and the court noble Reizei Tamemasa (1361–1417), of whom the latter could trace back his genealogy to Fujiwara no Teika, the ultimate source of legitimacy in the late medieval age. Since Shōtetsu was not of noble lineage, he could not hope to practice his profession at court; hence it was to Ryōshun, a man of the warrior classes who offered access to a more amenable market, at least in practical terms, that he chiefly looked for guidance. Under Ryōshun's tutelage, Shōtetsu studied poetic composition and the court classics, submitted work for critique, engaged in various tests of competence and received esoteric teachings and training. The similarity of the new profession to the clerical profession must have prepared him well and made the prevailing patterns of literary practice seem familiar. Finally, he was certified by his master and designated with the professional name of Seigan Shōgetsu'an, which identified him as an authority. All this happened before 1420. Thereafter, for the next forty years, until his death in 1459, he lived in various cottages in the capital, thus signifying his affiliation with earlier monk-poets. All indications are that poetry was his chief occupation, as well as a major source of income. At a time when poets could make little from the circulation of their *works*, he—like most other commoner literati—depended instead on his *work* as a teacher and authority to make a living. Rather than selling books, he sold himself.

Shōtetsu's personal anthologies of poetry and his treatise-memoir *Shōtetsu monogatari* (Conversations with Shōtetsu, 1450?) offer us a clear picture of his professional duties and how he carried them out. To begin with, these texts reveal that he must have spent a good deal of his time in private study and practice of his art. Concurrently, however, they show that such work was generally undertaken in preparation for performance in a public setting, a feature of literary life in his period that should never be forgotten. Over and over again, for instance, the headnotes to his poems indicate that they were composed for *tsukinamikai*, or monthly poetry meetings, held at the homes of important patrons among the military clans and in temples. These were social events with ritual features that called upon Shōtetsu as an expert to provide leadership in certain prescribed ways, such as providing the set of topics (*dai*) on which poems would be composed or acting as lector (*kōshi*) or judge in questions of proper usage or vocabulary, in the same way that a court scribe might serve as a source of specialized knowledge in the context of various deliberations. A brief note—and it is one among many—from *Shōtetsu monogatari* speaks eloquently for his role as the voice of authority:

> II, 54. For the topic "A Fire in the Brazier," one may treat either buried embers or a burning fire, but for the topic "Buried Embers," one may not treat a fire in the brazier.[5]

The source of the "rule" Shōtetsu invokes here we do not know, although it could easily have come from either Ryōshun or Tamemasa; but that he accepted it, as well as his duty to proclaim it, seems beyond question. The nature of his identity as a professional was after all to use his knowledge and skill—his proven competence—to respond to the contingencies of practice in the kind of social setting that was the primary site of poetic composition in his time. In his own chambers he could perhaps dispense with such considerations, although there is little evidence that he did; at a poetic gathering, social and genre conventions were his stock in trade. Indeed, in quotes like the following, again from *Shōtetsu monogatari*, he represents himself as one whose task is the maintenance of a discipline that clearly sustains a specific social hierarchy:

> I, 9. The leading poem for an extemporaneous set of a hundred poems should be deferred to the person of appropriate status—the master of the house, or the most accomplished poet. However, when choosing by lot the topics for a set of twenty or thirty poems on the seasons, the leading poem may be composed by anyone.[6]
>
> I, 95. On formal public occasions, the lector withdraws as soon as all of the poems by the courtiers have been read out loud. Not until these poems are being read does the sovereign take his own poem-slip from the folds of his robe and hand it to the regent or chancellor, upon which a new lector comes in. He reads the sovereign's poem seven times. For those in the imperial entourage as well, poems by the regent and the highest court nobles are read three times. Poems by members of the shogun's family have also been read three times in recent years.[7]
>
> II, 14. At an impromptu poetry gathering, the poem-slips of the younger members of the group are written last and submitted first. When old and young are in attendance, one or two inkstones are pushed from one person to the next, with the elders and seniors writing first and the young ones in the lowest seats writing last. Notwithstanding, they must be the first to pass in their poem-slips to the master of the topics. No matter how quickly they may think of their poems, the junior members must not write them down before the senior members have finished. This rule must be scrupulously observed . . .[8]
>
> II, 57. Women and girls, when they write poems on pocket paper, should not leave a blank space at the bottom. It is all right to leave any amount of blank space at the top.[9]

After reading such statements, one can easily imagine Shōtetsu seated in a poetic gathering with a diverse group of people—a noble of middling rank; a *daimyō*, or warlord, and his wife or sister; a few samurai; the abbot of a temple, a few of his own disciples, from various backgrounds—if not in this order, at least in some specific order. In such a group the professional poet would act as arbiter, source of knowledge, and master of ceremonies. And even in his own hut, sitting only with students anxious to obtain such "knowledge" along with tidbits of lore and esoteric commentary, Shōtetsu performed a similar function—all in pursuit of a literary profession that may have seemed to represent only an aesthetic tradition but in fact articulated and reinforced a highly stratified social structure. The poems he left us, which are usually "recontextualized" in collections that note only the conventional topics upon which they were composed, may only hint at this dimension of their existence; but what we know of his practice makes it clear that his "work" was often a kind of performance with social ends and social consequences.

Was Shōtetsu aware of his role? Or, more interestingly, was he satisfied with it? These are questions to which complete answers of course cannot be given. The only thing one can say with confidence is that, like any professional in any time, he must have accepted many of the conventions of his practice as at least proper and perhaps even "natural." But comments such as the following reveal that he was sometimes impatient with the standards of his day.

> II, 65. In poetry there are many vexations. Winding up loose ends and thinking of the future—things never turn out as one had intended. If one continues to compose poems of the sort that everyone else considers good, one must remain forever at that ordinary level. On the other hand, when one writes poems whose essence is profound and difficult, others fail to understand them, and this is frustrating. No doubt what is generally called good would seem to be good enough, I suppose.[10]

Thus, with some diffidence, Shōtetsu hints at his feelings about the status quo. And one must add that his attitude was duly noted by those at the pinnacle of poetic reputation, the court families—meaning most prominently the Asukai—by whom the discipline of poetry in the mid-fifteenth century was governed, so to speak, from the top. Already excluded from a leadership role in the upper social reaches of his profession by his lack of aristocratic pedigree, his "arrogance" resulted in a sort of banishment from poetic society for a time in the 1430s and thereafter to a life on the fringes of court society, where he engaged in stylistic experiments that often alienated him from the grand tradition as practiced at court.[11] In terms of his profession, then, his attitude led to a kind of social censure—an exclusion imposed upon him externally but partially at his own request, despite his acknowledged professional skill.

[4] Weber, 25.

[5] Robert H. Brower and Steven D. Carter, *Conversations with Shōtetsu* (Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, Univ. of Michigan, 1992), 142.

[6] Ibid., 119.

[7] Ibid., 104.

[8] Ibid., 122.

[9] Ibid., 144.

[10] Ibid., 147.

[11] See ibid., 26–30, for details.

Yet it is important to note at this point that Shōtetsu never gave up his activities as a master of poetry. For even in his own time Shōtetsu's critique of the status quo did not constitute a repudiation of the profession. Indeed, my purpose in evoking these statements is to show how by alienating himself from certain poetic circles he was simply opting for a change in his career that would identify him as a semi-recluse,[12] allowing him to make statements such as this:

> [. . .] In this art of poetry, those who speak ill of Teika should be denied the protection of the gods and Buddhas and condemned to the punishments of hell.
>
> Teika's descendants split into the two factions of the Nijō and Reizei, and these with Tamekane's faction make up three schools . . . It is my opinion that a person should pay no attention whatever to these schools . . .[13]

Elsewhere I have characterized this declaration as a turn away from teachers of the present toward a teacher of the past.[14] But, however one may choose to conceptualize it, Shōtetsu's act signified a professional choice, with attendant religious overtones that will surprise no student of medieval poetry and that were by his time already conventional—the choice of affiliation with a number of earlier figures whose names are specifically mentioned in *Shōtetsu monogatari*, including Fujiwara no Shunzei, Tonna, and Yoshida no Kenkō, most conspicuously.[15] These names also constituted a kind of authority, indeed an authority that claims to be transcendent in some ways.[16] That Shōtetsu seeks to identify with them is evidence enough that he still thought of himself as a professional, although a professional of an ideologically higher order. For as Pierre Bourdieu notes in a consideration of "rites of institution," the highest articulation of professional authority often involves what looks like self-sacrifice.[17] I would argue that Shōtetsu's turn away from the professional factions of his time and toward Teika and his "spiritual" heirs was just such an act of symbolic sacrifice, a self-exclusion aimed at a kind of distinction that derives from the authority of religious ideals and the special status accorded to those who find themselves on the margins.[18]

* * *

If historical status may be elicited as a measure of success, one must say that Shōtetsu's bold act of self-exclusion paid off. For complex political reasons, he gained the support of powerful patrons such as Ichijō Kaneyoshi (1402–81) and was able to maintain a reputation for himself, especially among the military houses. One of the ironies of his career, however, is that he succeeded in one of the most vital of professional duties—namely, self-replication—most noticeably not in his genre of choice, the *uta*, but in linked verse, or *renga*. For among his students it was the *renga* masters Chiun (d. 1448), Sōzei (d. 1455), and Shinkei (1406–75) that gained greatest professional prominence, eventually going on to replicate themselves in a number of other masters, including most preeminently Inō Sōgi (1421–1502).

Since I have written at great length about the topic in other places, I will say only this about Sōgi's career: that he, like Shōtetsu, came from a commoner background; that he, too, began his professional life by entering a Buddhist monastery; and that then, after choosing *renga* poetry as a profession in his thirties, he went on through the usual steps of instruction and initiation to receive various certificates of authority and become a socially recognized master of linked verse with numerous students, some even among the old nobility.[19] Although he is well known for his affiliation with the more conservative literary families at court, he also studied under several of Shōtetsu's students, with whom he had much in common professionally and whose reputations he did much to further during the course of a long and active career.[20]

[12] One could argue that this step was not available in the same way for courtier poets, whose role in the bureaucratic system made withdrawal professionally impossible. For an analysis of the phenomenon of "semi-reclusion" in Japanese Zen that helps make sense of Shōtetsu's actions, see Joseph D. Parker, "The Hermit at Court: Reclusion in Early Fifteenth-Century Japanese Zen Buddhism," *Journal of Japanese Studies*, 21.1 (1995).

[13] Brower and Carter, 61–62.

[14] Steven D. Carter, "Seeking What the Masters Sought': Masters, Disciples, and Poetic Enlightenment in Late Medieval Japan," *The Distant Isle: Studies and Translations of Japanese Literature in Honor of Robert H. Brower* (Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, Univ. of Michigan, 1996).

[15] Although both Tonna and Kenkō were opponents in the sense that they were devotees of the Nijō school at court, Shōtetsu—predictably—shows respect for both as professionals. See Carter and Brower, 68, 95–96, 105–6, 163.

[16] Stylistically, this transcendence may have a correlative in the ideal of *yūgen*, or "mystery and depth," that Shōtetsu argues "is something that cannot possibly be explained in words or distinguished clearly in the mind." Brower and Carter, 161–62.

[17] Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 117–26.

[18] Ibid.

[19] See Steven D. Carter, *Three Poets at Yuyama* (Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, Univ. of California, 1983), 12–34.

[20] Sōgi studied with both Sōzei and Shinkei. In the 1470s he put together an anthology of linked verse by those and several other prominent students of Shōtetsu's, entitled *Chikurinshō*. That a disciple of the conservative Tō no Tsuneyori (1401–84) should undertake such a labor on behalf of poets such as Shinkei who were of the opposite camp is further evidence of the way professional loyalties often transcend philosophical or stylistic differences.

Unlike Shōtetsu, Sōgi never repudiated the literary factions of his day, nor was he ever ostracized by patrons or clients for arrogance. To the contrary, one might almost say that he represents those who in Shōtetsu's words are content to make do with what the world calls "good enough." But I would contend that at least one of his actions late in life constitutes a kind of self-exclusion that links him to Shōtetsu. I refer to his decision in the last month of 1489 to retire as Steward of the Shogunal Renga Master (*sōshō*)—an official sinecure granted by the shogun himself that brought with it financial rewards as well as social prestige—after less than two years in that office.[21]

To be sure, there may have been many factors that went in to Sōgi's decision, many of which the documents of the time do not reveal to us; but it is nonetheless clear that quitting the office that was the pinnacle of the *renga* profession after so short a stint was an act of self-exclusion. In a word, it was an act that declared to the world a kind of "retirement," but a retirement that, when we see it in the light of his later activities, seems not to have signalled any withdrawal from the usual professional obligations. For during the years after his resignation, Sōgi, living much of the time in his cottage in northern Kyōto, was more active than ever before as a master involved in all the primary tasks of a literary professional: teaching, collecting, copying, composing, judging, supervising.[22] Moreover, he was thoroughly involved in another activity that might also be considered an extension of his profession, and one—not by chance, I would argue—that he might not have been able to pursue so fully as Shogunal Master: namely, travel, which occupied fully half of his time from 1490 to 1502.[23]

So prominent is travel as a literary activity (and topos) in medieval literature that one can easily forget that not all poets actually spent much time on the road. Shōtetsu, for instance, seems to have stayed near home in Kyōto virtually all of his life; likewise, Sōgi's student Shōhaku was a sedentary type, as were most court poets. Sōgi, however, was on the road constantly, on journeys that took him everywhere from Shirakawa Barrier in the north to Dazaifu in the south. In his early years such travels had doubtless been a professional necessity, for travel was after all a way to meet patrons, to test competence, to do business. But the remarkable thing in Sōgi's case is that he continued traveling long after he could have settled into a lucrative literary practice in the capital, especially after his appointment as shogunal steward. In other words, I take his later travels to be less a product of necessity than of choice: again, a signal of his desire to gain an additional measure of quasi-religious authority, in his case via symbolic affiliation not with Teika or Shunzei, as had been true of Shōtetsu, but with other patron saints of poetry who were renowned as travelers—most importantly the monks Nōin (988–1050?) and Saigyō (1118–90).

Like Shōtetsu's condemnation of petty factionalism, then, I would argue that Sōgi's later travels—whatever their practical purposes—may be interpreted, along with his resignation as Shogunal Renga Master, as symbolically potent declarations of his professional ambitions. Retiring from the highest of bureaucratic offices, with attendant duties that would have kept him in the capital much of the time, was for Sōgi an act of self-exclusion that allowed him to play the professional role of mendicant, a kind of roving recluse. And this again was a step up to a higher order, a sacrifice that brought with it the promise of distinction.

* * *

After Sōgi, the poetic professions went through a series of transformations that paralleled changes taking place in Japanese society as a whole. Increased urbanization, economic diversification, rising rates of literacy, and the advent of new publishing technologies opened up new fields of discourse as surely as they created new markets. Poetic institutions, in other words, could not remain untouched by social change. One of the results of all this was a new genre, *haikai renku*, a form of linked verse whose formal origins can be traced back to the linked verse of Sōgi but whose immediate associations in the 1600s were more plebeian. But the old genre of *renga* retained its importance in the highest social circles; and some other things, too, remained remarkably the same. Still students wanting to pursue poetry as an occupation studied under masters, still those masters

[21] Earlier commissioners had stayed much longer. Sōzei for six years, Nōa (1397–1471) for fourteen years, and Sōi (1418–85) for at least a decade. Sōgi's successor, Kensai (1452–1510), also held the office for more than a decade.

[22] His last personal collections appeared in 1496 and 1499, and *Shinsen tsukubashū* (The New Tsukuba Collection)—an imperially commissioned anthology for which Sōgi was given chief responsibility—was submitted for imperial review in 1495. During his final years he also taught a number of students, lectured in the capital and in the provinces on the court classics, and continued to act as master at numerous linked verse sessions.

[23] His travels took him to Settsu, Ōmi, Echigo, Echizen, Kii, and also the Kantō.

served as figures of authority who constituted an élite cadre of specialists. Styles and stylistic trends changed, as did relationships between the cadres and other political and economic institutions, but poetic work in the early Edo period was still directed by socially sanctioned professionals.

The man we know as Matsuo Bashō—who is known in early records as Kiginsaku, Hanshichi, Tōshichirō, Tadaemon, Jinshichirō, and, most prominently, Munefusa—was born in the fourth decade of the Edo period, in the year 1644, near the castle town of Ueno in Iga province, the son of a wealthy landholder of samurai stock. We know virtually nothing of his life until his late teens, when he entered the service of Tōdō Yoshikiyo, heir of the Tōdō clan, feudal lords of Iga. Tradition says that he served on Yoshikiyo's kitchen staff, although no positive proof of that has ever been produced. In any case, for a young man of his background to enter into such service at one level or another was commonplace; and it was just as commonplace for one in such a situation to seek out an entrée into one of the artistic professions, as the young Munefusa, who had already shown a talent in *haikai* poetry, seems to have done.

Tōdō Yoshikiyo was an amateur *haikai* poet himself, who had taken the pen-name Sengin to declare his affiliation with Kitamura Kigin (1624–1705), one of the most prominent masters in nearby Kyōto. That Sengin and the young Munefusa should develop a special relationship was therefore only predictable. Probably through another local disciple of Kigin, Munefusa himself was affiliated with that Kyōto master, an adherent of the Teimon School of *haikai*. In 1666, he and his patron participated together in a linked verse sequence marking the anniversary of the deathdate of Matsunaga Teitoku (1571–1653), Kigin's teacher. Thus Munefusa was poised to gain entry into *haikai* society.

In 1666, Sengin died, leaving his literary companion (who now called himself Sōbō, a pen-name created by simply reading the characters of Munefusa in Chinese instead of Japanese) bereft in more ways than one. For of equal significance to the emotional blow of losing a fellow poet was the blow of losing an employer and patron. Contrary to popular stories that have him wandering for some years trying to come to terms with the death of Sengin, he seems to have stayed in Ueno for the next four or five years, probably living with his family.

Although it seems certain that Munefusa continued composing poetry and that he remained in contact with Kigin, we do not know precisely what he did with his time during these years, that is, until 1672, when he presented a thirty-verse *hokku awase* as a votive offering to the Tenmangū Shrine in Ueno. No doubt that act had private significance as well; but to us it is important because such an offering was one of the conventional steps taken by those embarking upon the *haikai* profession. Before, he had remained something of an amateur; after 1672 he was clearly asking to be known as a professional *haikai* poet.

The steps the young poet took toward acquiring the full privileges of the profession were entirely "conventional" in the sense of that term employed by Bourdieu and other sociologists. First, he sought further instruction from Kigin, eventually receiving secret teachings that conferred upon him a socially recognized authority.[24] Next, he left his hometown and went to a cultural center, in this case Edo, which was at the time still a young, lively, and open city where a young man could make a name for himself more easily than in Kyōto—a choice clearly dictated by professional ambitions.[25] Then he did what Shōtetsu or Sōgi or Kigin would have counseled him to do: he practiced, in order to establish his reputation. Early on, he seems to have relied chiefly on acquaintances from Iga and other disciples of Kigin for the social connections necessary to gain access to sources of symbolic power. To make ends meet, he took several clerical jobs, one in the City Waterworks Department, another as the scribe to a senior poet.[26] But records make it clear that his dedication was to *haikai* as a profession. By 1675, under the pen-name Tōsei, he was gaining recognition through his participation in *haikai* gatherings and representation in *haikai* anthologies and had even begun to attract students. Like most young poets of the time, he became a devotee of the Danrin school, headed by Nishiyama Sōin (1605–82). Although this was a decision some scholars want to see as deriving from purely artistic motivations, it seems undeniable that it was also a necessary move for a young poet seeking professional recognition.

In the spring of 1477, Tōsei held a thousand-verse gathering and probably put out his shingle as a *sōshō*, or "master." By this time he was acting as judge and teacher, after shaving his head bonze-style, another symbolic act signaling his identity as a professional. In a word, then, he had achieved "mastery," in all senses of that term. By 1680 he was living in the Nihonbashi area—a haven for *haikai* poets—and working full time as a *tenja*, or

[24] The date given for transmission of the secrets is 1674.

[25] Yonetani Iwao, "Bashō to sono jidai," in *Bashō*, ed. Imoto Nōichi, vol. 28 of *Kanshō Nihon koten bungaku* (Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1975), 436.

[26] Takano Yūzan (d. 1702).

"marker," a licensed *haikai* poet to whom work could be submitted for review and "marking" with judgments of excellence (*ten*). Most of his students were of course amateurs whose job in the economy of things was to provide him with a living; but a number of them were also becoming *deshi* or *shitei*, or in other words, disciples who would more obviously assure the social and cultural continuity that is essential to any professional group.

But in the winter of 1680 Tōsei did something that at first glance seems extraordinary: as noted at the beginning of this paper, he left Nihonbashi and took up residence in an area east of the river Sumida, giving up his nascent "practice" as a marker, an act that one scholar describes as tantamount to quitting the profession as a livelihood, another as an act of professional suicide.[27] Concurrently, he also seems to have made what scholars characterize as other "departures" from the expected *haikai* pattern—turning away from the Danrin style, taking up the study of Daoism and Chinese poets, and even studying Zen under Butchō, a monk living nearby. Likewise, it was around this time that he developed new relationships with his chief students, relying on them more for material sustenance, but through an informal, less superficially "secular" mode of reciprocation that permitted both master and disciple to think of the relationship in more idealistic terms.[28]

The usual way to account for this turning point in Bashō's life is to see it as motivated by either stylistic or spiritual concerns, which in either case are understood as expressing a new "seriousness" of purpose—the kind of seriousness evident in a famous *hokku* composed by Tōsei that very year:

> On a bare branch
> a crow has settled down to roost.
> In autumn dusk.[29]

This stark image is a powerful one, perhaps even powerful enough to tempt one toward a reading that sees the crow as the poet opting for an ascetic existence among the bare trees, a convenient metaphor for the modest "hut" with the plantain tree that would soon give its occupant the name Bashō. And no doubt his "retirement" did entail stylistic and spiritual changes that might be characterized as in some ways "de-professionalizing," to use the terminology of a prominent sociologist.[30] But I would like to depart from precedent and consider Tōsei's move across the river, his reincarnation as Bashō, as in fact a move that was from the beginning *enabled*, or made possible, by his profession. For despite the characterizations of most of his biographers, it is clear that after 1680 Bashō still depended upon *haikai* for his occupation. His new residence, belying its status as a hermitage (*an*), was not located off on a mountainside, but in the city; and he still had students—Sugiyama Sampū (1647–1732), Takarai Kikaku (1661–1707), Hattori Ransetsu (1654–1707), and others—who looked to him for guidance and were in financial terms absolutely essential to his continued practice.[31] His act was not simply a capitulation, then, or an abandonment; it was, however, an act of self-exclusion, similar to the acts of self-exclusion that we saw in the careers of Shōtetsu and Sōgi and could find in the careers of many other poets before Bashō's time.

In this sense Bashō's retirement was a thoroughly professional act with implications that were no doubt communicated to the social world that was the only possible arena for his art—the world of *haikai* society, meaning poets, both amateur and professional, as well as patrons, publishers, scholars, and other consumers of his work. It was not, then, an unprecedented act, but one that I believe the profession allowed for: a turn away from the commercial toward what ideologically were understood as the higher goals of the aesthetic and the religious, but which was also an attempt to gain greater esteem in the professional world, to reach a place reached by only a few. In a word, it was a way to reach out for fame, although a kind of fame that was always vouchsafed under a rule of modesty and self-effacement.

To those who study patterns of professionals and their institutions, such a characterization of Bashō's action may not be surprising. As one scholar, speaking for many others, says, it is routine for professions to define themselves in ways that pretend to "transcend the self-interest of business and market relations."[32] But for reasons that are equally transparent, literary scholars have been reluctant to analyze writers in terms of the social institutions that enable their work, assuming instead that their subjects of study should be understood individually, as

[27] See Abe Masami, 465, 472, and Kon Eizō, "Bashō no seikaku," in *Bashō kushū*, vol. 51 of *Shinchō nihon koten shūsei* (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1982), 366.

[28] It appears, for instance, that his disciples literally provided him with a "hut" and with food—as gifts rather than "payments."

[29] *Matsuo bashō shū*, ed. Imoto Nōichi et al., vol. 41 of *Nihon koten bungaku zenshū* (Tokyo: Shōgakkan, 1972), 61.

[30] See Randal Collins, "Market Closure and the Conflict Theory of the Professions," in Burrage and Torstendahl, 26–29.

[31] We know that by 1683 Bashō was living in a tenement apartment—still referred to as a hut—purchased by students.

[32] Weber, 27.

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isolated "artists" rather than as members of preconstituted communities.[33] Thus Shōtetsu, Sōgi, and Bashō often appear in literary histories as hermits in huts, bent over their writing desks in pursuit of a private inspiration that sets them apart from their contemporaries, producing "works" that are seldom analyzed in ways that relate to the concrete conditions of their professional practice.

With others, I would argue that there are many reasons to reject such a solipsistic view of literary work in any genre. But in the case of Bashō the reasons for abandoning such a view are particularly compelling. For Bashō's genre of *haikai renku*—a form of "linked verse" that was composed by anywhere from two to a dozen or so participants in a communal setting—was an art form that quite literally could not be pursued in the absence of a social context. Obscuring this fact, scholars even today tend to concentrate on Bashō's *hokku* rather than on his sequences; but any study of his life must deal with the fact that much of his professional time was spent pursuing his art in concert with other people—professionals and laymen, of necessity. And, as said above, this was as true after his move to Fukagawa as it had been before. That he stopped working as a *tenja* did not mean that he stopped practicing as a poet. And we can be certain that his students, both amateur and professional, saw his choice to move out of Nihonbashi as a step up and not a step out. Indeed, I would maintain that his move may be understood as an instance of what those in the highest ranks of a profession are often wont to do, i.e., to test their competence in a wider arena, and by so doing to claim a transcendent status for themselves and their occupations.[34]

Records of Bashō's life make the social dimensions of his existence abundantly clear to the student who looks beyond his "works" as mere representations of stylistic ideals to what they reveal about his practice.[35] But perhaps the most direct way to approach the subject is to examine his travel journals. For he wrote more of these—six, in fact—than any other major *haikai* poet; and, significantly, all of them were written after his retirement as *tenja*, indicating that for some reason—a professional one, I will argue—he felt the need to invest a good part of his time and much of his newly metamorphosed identity in life on the road. For these reasons the travel journals recommend themselves as useful resources for study of Bashō the professional.

The first of Bashō's extended journeys began in 1684, the autumn and winter of which he spent travelling from Edo to Ise, Yoshino, Nara, Kyōto, Ōgaki, Nagoya, returning to Edo via Kiso and Kai in the late spring of 1685. The next two years he spent in Edo, setting out again in the eighth month of 1687 to visit Kashima in the east, with Sora (1649–1710) and other disciples accompanying him, returning in the twelfth month of the same year. Over the next seven years until his death in 1694, other journeys—some shorter, some longer—took him everywhere from his hometown of Ueno in the Kansai to Matsushima and Sado in the north. Like Sōgi, he therefore quite literally spent half of his last years on the road, returning to Edo only for short visits, proving that, as he says at the beginning of a journal written in 1689, he had indeed fallen "prey to wanderlust some years ago, desiring nothing better than to be a vagrant cloud scudding before the wind."[36] He died—quite fortuitously—in Ōsaka, in borrowed rooms, surrounded by disciples.

Bashō's earliest travel record, which he named *Nozarashi kikō*, or "Exposure in the Fields," was written in 1685, as a chronicle of his first journey alluded to above. It was followed by *Kashima kikō* (A Journey to Kashima) in 1687, *Oi no kobumi* (Backpack Notes) in 1688, *Sarashina kikō* (A Journey to Sarashina) in 1689, and *Oku no hosomichi* (The Narrow Road of the Interior) in 1694. *Saga nikki* (Saga Diary), written in 1691, is the slim record of a few months spent in the Saga area of Kyōto in the early summer of that year. Thus while he stopped short of recording all of his wanderings, the extant travel writings taken together tell us much about his literary practice during his final years.

On a first reading, these records seem to reveal little that is useful to the student of Bashō as a professional. The focus is more on poems and on the aesthetic experience they represent than on the social circumstances in which those poems were created. Some pages, such as the following from *Nozarashi kikō*, in fact do little but record *hokku* with brief introductory notes of the sort found in imperial poetry and anthologies.

[33] The desire to grant writers independence from socio-political contexts may of course arise from a desire for a similar status among scholars themselves. See Scott Wilson, *Cultural Materialism: Theory and Practice* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1995), 1–8.

[34] Cf. Weber and Collins.

[35] To conflate practice with artifacts is particularly constricting in the case of haikai poets, whose "works" amount to only a skeletal record of their professional activities.

[36] Helen Craig McCullough, tr., "The Narrow Road of the Interior," in *Classical Japanese Prose* (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 1990), 522.

Chanted on the road into Nagoya:
A madcap verse:

A wind-battered tree—
such is my body, just like
old Chikusai's.

Grass for my pillow:
Is that a dog, weeping with the rain?
A voice in the night.

Walking around looking at the snow:

Hey, you townspeople!
Let me sell you this straw hat—
a hat made of snow.

Seeing a traveler:

Even a horse
gets a stare—when snow is falling
in the morning.

Spending a day at the beach:

The sea grows more dark—
the voices of the ducks sounding faintly white.[37]

Here, in patterns familiar to any student of Japanese poetry, we confront a record that reduces experience to the slim figures of a highly aestheticized response to natural scenes. And those same patterns are repeated constantly in the other travel records. Predictably, then, there are allusions to old poems, old places, and old poets and historical figures, along with some references to other sights along the road; but, just as predictably, overt references to the professional activities of Bashō's itinerary are scarce. In fact, reading the following passages from the beginnings of four of his most famous records one might conclude that the only motivation he admits to is a desire to see that most poetic of sights, the moon:

> "Setting out on a thousand-mile trek, I have no provisions for the road—casting my lot with the emptiness of the midnight moon." So said the man of old whose staff I took as my support as I left my hut by the river in the eighth month of the first year of Jōkyō.[38]
>
> *—Nozarashi kikō*

> It seems that when Teishitsu of Kyōto went to see the moon at Suma Bay, he said this: "In a pine's shade / beneath the fifteenth moon— / the Middle Counselor." With fondness for that same madman of old, I decided this autumn to go and see the moon in the mountains of Kashima.[39]
>
> *—Kashima mōde*

> Swayed into action by the importunings of the autumn wind, I set out to see Sarashina Village and the moon over Mount Obasute . . .[40]
>
> *—Sarashina kikō*

> I myself fell prey to wanderlust some years ago, desiring nothing better than to be a vagrant cloud scudding before the wind. Only last autumn, after having drifted along the seashore for a time, had I swept away the old cobwebs from my dilapidated riverside hermitage. But the year ended and before I knew it, I found myself looking at hazy spring skies and thinking of crossing Shirakawa Barrier . . . . By the time I had mended my torn trousers, put a new cord on my hat, and cauterized my legs with moxa, I was thinking only of the moon at Matsushima.[41]
>
> *—Oku no hosomichi*

Remote and ethereal, the moon is a perfect object of contemplation, as countless earlier poets had proven. To say that the desire to enjoy its light is the foremost motivation for any activity is to claim a familiar dedication to concerns that are almost wholly aesthetic.

Almost—but not all. For we should note that the same declaration also proclaims an affiliation with earlier poets, including Saigyō and Sōgi and a host of others whose names Bashō drops repeatedly. And in other ways too Bashō's travel records contain glimpses of the professional affiliations that formed the primary material and social context of his travels. As had been true in the age of Sōgi, going on the road was for any poet a way to renew acquaintances with old students and patrons, as well as create new ones. And if this makes him sound like an *oroshiya*, or traveling salesman, I would submit that the comparison is not entirely unfortunate. For we should not allow the aesthetic preoccupations of the verses from *Nozarashi kikō* quoted above to obscure the fact that at least three of them were originally the *hokku*, or "initiating verses," for full sequences, composed in linking sessions in which Bashō served as master, supervising a few of his traveling companions and local

[37] Tr. Carter.

[38] Tr. Carter.

[39] Tr. Carter. Teishitsu (1610–73) was a disciple of Matsunaga Teitoku (1571–1653). The "Middle Counselor" of his poem refers to Ariwara no Yukihira (818–893), the author of a famous poem about Suma.

[40] Tr. Carter.

[41] McCullough, 522.

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amateurs of the merchant and samurai classes who were clearly patrons.[42] Nor should we in our rush to get to the poems simply pass over passages like the following from *Oku no hosomichi*:

> At Obanazawa, we called on Seifū, a man whose tastes were not vulgar despite his wealth. As a frequent visitor to the capital, he understood what it meant to be a traveler, and kept us for several days, trying in many kind ways to make us forget the hardships of the long journey.[43]

Precisely what Bashō means by saying that his patron Seifū (1615–1721), whom other sources describe as a dealer in silk, tobacco, rice, and dyes with the lay name of Suzuki, "understood what it meant to be a traveler" we cannot be sure; but surely as a traveling poet Bashō expected to be welcomed—with rest, lodging, and food, at the least. And we can be sure that there were expectations on Seifū's side as well. While in Obanazawa Bashō would engage in his occupation by acting as master of the art in sessions involving Seifū and other local poets and patrons. Of these sessions we have only fragments, but fragments not so small as to disguise all that is behind them—namely, the patterns of Bashō's poetic practice.[44]

None of this surprises students of Bashō's life, of course; scholars have always known that Bashō visited patrons on the road, and that as a poet he was involved in the world of commerce. My point in drawing attention to these activities in this specific context, however, is to argue that Bashō's reticence in treating worldly matters in his travel records, and his corresponding attention to legend, history, and aesthetic experience, result less from happenstance or personal style than from a professional imperative that is somewhat predictable. His "style," in other words, is predetermined by a code inherited from the past—from Shōtetsu, Sōgi, and a host of others—but also observable in other times and places, a code that requires those at the true pinnacle of the profession to represent themselves as operating from "high motives of altruism, or glory, or of moral, spiritual or aesthetic commitment, rather than for mundane gain." Not surprisingly, this "ideological covering" is seen rather routinely in many professions until this day.[45]

Now, this same ideology is of course observable in Bashō's activities back in Edo as well. But it is in the nature of travel records—especially so in their prose sections—to reveal both more cracks in the aesthetic surface and more overt statements of professional ideology, as in the following from the beginning of *Oi no kobumi*:

> Within the hundred bones and nine orifices of my body is something that I will give the name Furabō—"the Monk of Gossamer on the Wind": which is to say that it is a thin fabric easily torn by the wind. Since long ago Furabō has loved mad verses, eventually making them the means of its way through life. Sometimes it grew tired of poetry and almost cast it aside; other times it was caught up in pride, thinking it had triumphed over others. In its breast a conflict raged, for which its body suffered. For a while it sought to establish itself, but was prevented; then it studied in order to realize its ignorance, only to be defeated once more, ending up following—without skill, without talent—this one lone way. The *waka* of Saigyō, the *renga* of Sōgi, the paintings of Sesshū, the tea of Rikyū—the thing that runs through all of these is one and the same. For elegance follows creation, befriends the four seasons. What it sees—never is that not a flower; what is thinks of—never is that not the moon. If the form be not a flower—that is the same as being a barbarian; if the heart be not a flower—that is to be among the birds and beasts. Go out from among the barbarians, depart from the beasts! Follow creation, return to creation![46]

Any student who has thought about professions as social institutions will not miss the signs of special pleading at work in this famous passage, in which the poet presents himself—in terms that almost deny him any volition in the matter—as dedicated to beauty, to the great poets of the past and their high ideals, and to the ultimate legitimizing power of nature, while failing to make any mention of the more mundane features of his

[42] The first verse was composed for a session involving the Nagoya merchants Jūgo (d. 1717), Yasui (d. 1743), and Tokoku (d. 1690); the third verse for one involving Hōgetsu; and the last one for one involving Tōyō (d. 1712), a rich man of Atsuta City. One of Bashō's companions at the time was Boku'in (1646–1725), a wealthy shipper from nearby Ōgaki.

[43] McCullough, 539.

[44] Bashō records four *hokku* written during his time with Seifū, three by himself and one by Sora. We know from other sources that he also participated in a number of *haikai renku* sequences.

[45] See Collins, 35.

[46] Tr. Carter.

practice. Nor will that student be surprised to read the sentence and poem that immediately follow the passage:

> At the beginning of the godless month the skies were unsettled, and I felt like a leaf on the wind, destination unknown.
>
> A traveler—
> by that name will I be called,
> amidst first showers.[47]

It need hardly be said that the definition of travel presented here is central to Bashō's professional aspirations. As Bourdieu might say, the amount one is ready to "suffer" is the measure of one's commitment—acknowledged or not. Clearly, Bashō was ready to "accept the sacrifices that are implied by privilege."[48] His devotion to the profession—or at least to its idealized image—was total. Another passage—this one from *Oku no hosomichi*—says it all:

> We lodged the night at Iizuka . . . Thunder rumbled during the night, and rain fell in torrents. What with the roof leaking right over my head and the fleas and mosquitoes biting, I got no sleep at all. To make matters worse, my old complaint flared up, causing me such agony that I almost fainted.
>
> At long last, the short night ended and we set out again. Still feeling the effects of the night, I rode a rented horse to Kōri post-station. It was unsettling to fall prey to an infirmity while so great a distance remained ahead. But I told myself that I had deliberately planned this long pilgrimage to remote areas, a decision that meant renouncing worldly concerns and facing the fact of life's uncertainty. If I were to die on the road—very well, that would be Heaven's decree.[49]

There is no reason to doubt the reality of the pain that Bashō describes here, nor the strength of the resolve that he articulates, any more than there is a reason to deny the power and beauty of his poems, whatever their status as part of his practice. But we should at least recognize that what he is communicating, to his own students, as well as to the whole *haikai* profession and beyond, is a particular kind of resolve that is ideologically significant: a professional resolve that is meant to connect him with the élite of the past and to show his worthiness to be counted in their number in the present. For such dedication was virtually a prerequisite for anyone aspiring to ultimate fame. What looks like self-denial, even if the self-denial is sincere, even if it is self-delusion—is in fact, then, also a claim for special status. Travel in the late seventeenth century was not as dangerous as it had been for Sōgi; but it was, in ideological terms, still a rite of passage that had to be represented as entailing hardship.

It is important to note that going on the road did, quite literally, involve trials: professional rites of passage need not be empty of real challenge in order to function as rites of passage. To borrow the words of Samuel Weber writing about professionals of another time and place, the road was an arena of real struggle—"the struggle to assimilate the shocks and intrusions of experience" according to conventions.[50] But the point is that the trials were not an impediment to Bashō's purposes; they were part and parcel of those purposes. Thus, as he traveled, Bashō's competence as a master of poetry was continually tested—in linking sessions where he had to show his leadership skills, his command of rules and conventions, and his creative capacities in a way that justified both the appropriateness of his position as a professional and the appropriateness of his companions as disciples or laymen; in encounters with famous places that demanded skillful poetic responses, in addition to a thorough knowledge of the responses of predecessors in the profession; and, not least importantly, in the conversion of the raw material of experience into a travel journal that would be judged against earlier works as part of the attempt for lasting reputation. In this sense, a knowledge of the patterns of professional conventions that gave structure to his practice is no more sufficient to explain his place in history than is a knowledge of the rules of his genre of linked verse sufficient to account for the excellence of his poetry. But noting those patterns—patterns almost never explicitly revealed—is still worthwhile for the new vantage point it affords those concerned with Bashō and his world.

* * *

What, then, can an analysis of Bashō as a professional offer? First, it can help us see the patterns of his existence in terms of the institutions in which he participated. Remembering that he was a professional whose practice was in many ways like the practice of other professionals may help us understand his existence more

[47] Tr. Carter.

[48] Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 122.

[49] McCullough, 531.

[50] Weber, 23.

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completely. It may help us to see that his poems and other writings were not produced or read solely as aesthetic artifacts, but also as statements of status within a literary community that was socially constituted, with its own agendas. It will also show that his "works"—meaning the artifacts he left behind—should not be regarded as fully identical with his practice. Every linked-verse sequence was in the beginning a social event, albeit one that often remains for us impossible to reconstruct fully.

So the profession Bashō chose for himself was constituted by stratifications and hierarchies within which he opted at a certain point for the ultimate distinction, probably knowing the challenges and loyalties such a choice would entail. Among other things, this means that we cannot agree with those who see a desire for freedom—at least in the naive sense—as the true motive for his travels any more than we can see a desire for freedom as the motive behind his decision to leave Nihonbashi for Fukagawa.[51] In fact, his motive in going on the road may have been, in a way, the opposite—to exert authority symbolically *and* materially, bringing new students under his sway and subjecting new spaces to his power.[52] He was, after all, a Master. And this also means that we should not be surprised to find him adopting a conservative attitude on important literary issues of his day, explaining why, in contrast to Saikaku, for instance, he turned so resolutely away from the new urban market that increasingly demanded literature as entertainment rather than a tool for the education of the sensibility; or why he adhered so steadfastly to the classical canon of aristocratic literature, condemning as vulgar ever recent poets in his own genre such as Matsunaga Teitoku and Nishiyama Sōin.[53]

Finally, to return to his travel records, I believe that a consideration of Bashō's place in the literary hierarchy of his day will help us see his "mastery" in terms that situate him and his profession more clearly in the discourses of his time. His insistence on the identity of rice-planting songs with the larger poetic tradition, his careful noting of the unexpected refinement of village urchins or farm-wives, his praise for the inherent honesty of innkeepers or rural guides: all of these things, viewed in the context of the strategies that legitimized his profession, will be seen no longer as quaint characterizations or vehicles of style but rather as articulations of a conservative discourse whose genealogy can be traced back at least as far as Ki no Tsurayuki. Not surprisingly, the perceived contours of that discourse succeeded in keeping poetry out of debates—overtly, at least—on politics, ethics, and other issues of value by granting it a place "outside" the realm of more "engaged" discourses. Judging from the way Bashō and other professional poets are still analyzed, one must say that that strategy has succeeded. For scholars dealing with literary texts—and I include myself here—have long resisted the idea of "reducing" poetry to the status of political rhetoric of the sort one finds in the "popular" media.[54] But to deny poetry any place in the larger discourses of its time is simply to deny its power in another way. Bashō and other poets do their best to keep their art safely in the margins, exempt from certain kinds of scrutiny, almost demanding to be viewed by what Bourdieu calls the "pure gaze";[55] if we insist on leaving it there—leaving the crow in his bare tree—we end up having to ignore the implications of statements like this, taken from a description of his 1689 visit to Nikkō, the funeral shrine of the reigning Tokugawa clan:

> On the first day of the fourth month, we went to worship at the shrine. In antiquity, the name of that holy mountain was written Nikōsan [Two-Storm Mountain], but the Great Teacher Kūkai changed it to Nikkō [Sunlight] when he founded the temple. It is almost as though the Great Teacher had been able to see a thousand years into the future, for today the shrine's radiance extends throughout the realm, its beneficence overflows in the eight directions, and the four classes of people dwell in security and peace. This is an awesome subject of which I shall write no more.
>
> Ah, awesome sight!
> On summer leaves and spring leaves,
> the radiance of the sun![56]

The trees here, so to speak, are not bare, but full of social and ideological significance. Is this an endorsement of the shogunal institution? Of its dogmas? Perhaps so; perhaps not. The question of course needs further analysis. I am suggesting that one way to begin this process is to say, first, that Bashō the professional poet must have recognized an ideologically constituted affiliation with the Great Teacher, and, second, that study of the dynamics of other professions should make us pay special attention when any professional marks a subject so holy that about it he will "write no more." I do this not to debunk but to demystify, or in other words, to begin to understand the socio-economic world in which Bashō operated as a poet, and the ideological and social dimensions of his professional *work* in ways not dominated by those traces we are accustomed to calling his art.

[51] Yonetani, 441.

[52] See Weber, 18–32, for an analysis of professional conventions that draws on Peirce and Freud to see those conventions as a means of combat anxiety and the fear involved in confrontations with alterity.

[53] For Bashō's criticisms of Saikaku, see Yonetani, 442. No doubt the career of Saikaku, too, could be analyzed in the context of professional patterns, but it seems clear that in opting for the new genre of "fiction" he was openly embracing commerce in ways that Bashō did not. For an article that deals with a similar historical period and similar professional choices, see Siegfried J. Schmidt, "Conventions and Literary Systems," in *Rules and Conventions*, ed. Mette Hjort (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1992).

[54] I should admit also a desire to avoid two other kinds of reductivism pointed out by Michael Burrage, Konrad Jarausch, and Hannes Siegrist, in "An actor-based framework for the study of the professions," an essay included in Burrage and Torstendahl. The first they describe as a tendency, derived from naive readings of Foucault, to treat "the professions as 'a field of discourse', as though they were dominated by disciplinary concerns and never had to practice their profession" (p. 216). The second, not unrelated to the first, is to treat professionals as mere agents of repression who enjoy "excessive power and privileges" and whose "ethical codes are bogus and a cover for the pursuit of their material interests and so on" (p. 223).

[55] See Bourdieu, *Distinction*.

[56] McCullough, 525.

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THE JAIN KNOWLEDGE WAREHOUSES: TRADITIONAL LIBRARIES IN INDIA

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The Jains of western India have preserved hundreds of thousands of handwritten manuscripts for many centuries in their libraries or "knowledge warehouses" (*jñān bhaṇḍār*). These manuscripts have been an invaluable aid in reconstructing much of the history of Indian society, religion, philosophy, and art. But these libraries have never been viewed as social institutions in and of themselves. This article investigates the patterns of ownership, management, and use of the libraries and the manuscripts in the small town of Pāṭaṇ in north Gujarat, to essay a beginning of a sociology of Jain knowledge. Some manuscript collections were owned by individual laymen, some by domesticated monks, and others were under the control of the leaders of the lay congregations. At the same time as these manuscripts have come to the attention of the scholarly world, their utility within the Jain community itself has drastically declined, as handwritten manuscripts have been replaced by printed books for both ritual and pedagogical purposes. As a result, while the manuscripts are better cared for than ever, they have been relegated to a marginal status within the Jain community, and hence my use of the term "warehouse" to describe these libraries.

STUDENTS OF INDIA OWE A GREAT debt to the Jains for the hundreds of thousands of invaluable handwritten manuscripts preserved in their many *jñān bhaṇḍārs* (Sanskrit *jñāna-bhāṇḍāgāra*) or "knowledge warehouses" in western and southern India. A recent article by Donald Clay Johnson, "The Western Discovery of Jain Temple Libraries," provides an excellent overview of the process by which British administrators and Western scholars in the nineteenth century became aware of and gained access to these extensive manuscript collections of the Jains in western India.[1] The discovery and publication of some of the more important of these manuscripts expanded greatly scholarly knowledge of Indian history, literature, philosophy, and art. But the role of these manuscript collections within the Jain tradition has changed greatly in the past century. In this article I look at the libraries themselves, to indicate patterns of ownership, management, and use of the libraries and the manuscripts. In particular, I look at the libraries in the important Jain community of Pāṭaṇ (the medieval Aṇahillavāḍa Paṭṭana), in north Gujarat. While not attempting to be comprehensive, this article essays a beginning at a sociology of Jain knowledge.[2]

Written copies of manuscripts have long played an important role in Jain intellectual, ritual, and community life. In the absence of any living enlightened teachers—according to Jain cosmological doctrines, enlightenment in this era became impossible shortly after the demise and liberation of Mahāvīra over 2,500 years ago—the texts containing the teachings of Mahāvīra are essential for the guidance of the Jain community. An early nineteenth century hymn expresses this sentiment quite clearly: "In this difficult time, the icons of the Jina and the scriptures of the Jina are the supports of the faithful Jains."[3] *Svādhyāya*, or study of the scriptures, is an important and expected activity of all mendicants, and is found in early lists of internal austerities practiced by them. Various

[1] Donald Clay Johnson, "The Western Discovery of the Jain Temple Libraries," *Libraries and Culture* 28 (1993): 189–203. See also his "Georg Bühler and the Western Discovery of Jain Temple Libraries," *Jain Journal* 26 (1992): 197–210.

[2] For a detailed description of the Jain community of Pāṭaṇ, see John E. Cort, "Liberation and Wellbeing: A Study of the Śvetāmbar Mūrtipūjak Jains of North Gujarat," Ph.D. diss., Harvard Univ., 1989.

[3] Vir Vijay, *Cosaṭh Prakārī Pūjā* (composed in 1815), in *Vividh Pūjā Saṅgrah*, ed. Paṇnyās Jinendra Vijay Gaṇi (Sivāṇā: Tapāgacch Jain Saṅgh, 1986), 214.

texts give us some details concerning the praxis of study in the early Jain tradition. In the Śvetāmbara *Uttarādhyayana Sūtra*, for example, we read, "There are five elements to study: oral recitation, questioning, repetition, reflection, and religious sermons" (30.34).[4]

Among the key events in the crystallization of the split between the Śvetāmbara and Digambara sects were three Śvetāmbara councils held in Valabhi in Gujarat and Mathurā in north India in the fourth and fifth centuries to commit to writing standard editions of key Jain texts.[5] According to a Śvetāmbara Jain tradition, the first libraries were built in the late eighth century. During a fierce drought between 785 and 789 the monks grew lax in their observance of the full monastic behavior, and so several monastic leaders decided that manuscript collections should be established in major cities in order to preserve Jain knowledge.[6]

Arranging for manuscripts to be copied for monks to use and establishing places for them to be kept were among the duties expected of laity as part of their support for and devotion to the monastic community. The three most important 'fields of donation' for medieval Śvetāmbara laity were images of the Jinas, temples containing such images, and Jain texts.[7] Furthermore, the colophons on some manuscripts indicate that commissioning the copying of a manuscript generated merit that could be dedicated to a living or deceased ancestor. For example, in the thirteenth century v.s. the layman Soma arranged for the copying (*lekh*) of the *Śāntināthacaritra* portion of Hemacandra's *Triṣaṣṭiśalākāpuruṣacaritra* to give to his mendicant guru Dhaneśvarasūri, but with the spiritual benefit (*śreyas*) going to his father.[8] Similarly, in 1362 Jasā Dūṅgara and his wife Vījhī Tīlhī arranged for the copying of the *Dharmavidhiprakaraṇa* of Śrīprabhasūri, with the spiritual benefit going to both Jasā's father Limbā and his mother.[9] It is therefore not surprising to find that medieval Jain kings and merchants were famous for the libraries that they established. The twelfth-century emperor Kumārapāla is said to have established twenty-one libraries in Pāṭaṇ, which was his capital,[10] and arranged for the copying of seven sets of the Śvetāmbara āgamas along with Hemacandra's Sanskrit and Prakrit grammar;[11] and the fourteenth-century *mahāmātya* ("prime minister") Vastupāla is said to have established three libraries in Pāṭaṇ, Cambay, and Broach at a combined cost of 180 million rupees.[12] Most lay congregations today maintain separate accounts, known as "knowledge accounts" (*jñān khātā*), in which the funds are to be used only for the propagation of knowledge, primarily by printing books or pamphlets.[13]

The libraries established by Kumārapāla and Vastupāla in Pāṭaṇ are believed to have been destroyed by the Muslims, with some of the texts transferred to the library in Jaisalmer in the Rajasthani desert for safekeeping.[14] Most of the extant manuscripts in Pāṭaṇ are from a later period, and most (over 23,000) are on paper. Only a little fewer than seven hundred palmleaf manuscripts remain in Pāṭaṇ. The oldest dated palmleaf manuscript is from 1062 C.E., although there are perhaps half-a-dozen undated ones from earlier in the tenth century. Of the dated palmleaf manuscripts, about a dozen are from the twelfth century, about one hundred from the thirteenth century, and the latest is dated 1441 C.E.[15] The oldest paper manuscript, on the other hand, dates from 1300–1301 C.E.[16] A count of the dates as given by Muni Puṇyavijay (who organized the libraries) in the manuscript catalogues gives the following distribution for the copying of the approximately 18,500 paper manuscripts for which either a specific date is given in the colophon, or Puṇyavijay provided an estimated date:[17]

15th c. v.s.[18]	4.9%
16th c.	16.6%
17th c.	26.9%
18th c.	18.6%
19th c.	23.2%
20th c.	9.9%

A perusal of the titles of the manuscripts indicates that the numbers of copies of a given manuscript are directly related to its ritual and authoritative roles.[19] We find many copies of texts belonging to the Śvetāmbara 'canon', devotional texts used in community rituals, narrative texts used by monks as the bases for sermons, grammars used for the learning of Sanskrit and Prakrit, and texts that are crucial to mendicant praxis. It is not surprising, therefore, that Georg Bühler in 1873 found in an Ahmedabad Jain library 400 copies of the *Āvaśyakasūtra*, for this important text contains the rules and texts for the six daily rites (*āvaśyaka*) that are obligatory for all mendicants.[20] More technical or philosophical works were copied less frequently. This pragmatic reason behind the choice of which manuscripts to copy also in large part explains both the demise of the tradition of copying manuscripts, and the lack of use of most libraries today: whereas in former times the Jain community needed to have on hand a number of copies of many texts for ritual and educational purposes, today these needs are met by printed copies.

The libraries themselves were kept either in small, dark, unventilated cellars, or in similar chambers above ground. Peter Peterson describes quite vividly the cellar attached to the Śāntināth temple in which was kept the famous Cambay library, which he visited in early 1883:

> The books are kept in a dark underground vault, on stepping out of the light into which you can see nothing that in the least suggests the real character of the place. As the eye becomes accustomed to the darkness, a hole in the wall is seen, which is the entrance into the smaller and darker vault where the books are kept. We gathered below the one window which from above lets light into this strange place . . .[21]

His description of another visit three years later, in February 1886, to another room in the same library, is even more graphic:

[4] Jarl Charpentier, ed., *The Uttarādhyayanasūtra*, Archives d'Études Orientales 18 (Uppsala: J.-A. Lundell, 1922), 215.

[5] On the problems involved in identifying these texts, as well as interpretive problems involved in speaking of a Jain 'canon', see Paul Dundas, *The Jains* (London: Routledge, 1992), 61–70; and three essays by Kendall W. Folkert, "Scripture and Continuity in the Jain Tradition," "The 'Canons' of 'Scripture': Text, Ritual, Symbol," and "The Jain Scriptures and the Study of Jainism," all in his *Scripture and Community*, ed. John E. Cort (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993), 41–94.

[6] Tripuṭī Mahārāj [Munis Darśanvijay, Jñānvijay, and Nyāyvijay], *Jain Paramparā no Itihās* (Ahmedabad: Śrī Cāritra Smārak Granthmālā, 1952), 542.

[7] Hemacandra, *Svopajñavṛtti* on *Yogaśāstra* 3.119, ed. Muni Jambū Vijay (Bombay: Jain Sāhitya Vikās Mandal, 1977–86), 564.

[8] *Praśasti* to ms. 167.1 in Saṅghvī Pāḍo Bhaṇḍār: C. D. Dalal, *A Descriptive Catalogue of Manuscripts in the Jain Bhandars of Pattan*, ed. L. B. Gandhi, Gaekwad's Oriental Series 76 (Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1937), 108. Also Muni Jinavijaya, ed., *Jainapustakaprāśastisaṁgraha*, vol. 1, Singhi Jaina Series 18 (Bombay: Bhāratīya Vidyā Bhavan, 1943), 20–21.

[9] *Praśasti* to ms. 27.1 in Śrī Saṅgh Bhaṇḍār, Pāṭaṇ: Dalal, ibid., 344–46, and Muni Jinavijaya, ibid., 79–81.

[10] *Kumārapāla Prabandha*, 16–17, quoted in Muni Puṇyavijay, "Jñānbhaṇḍārnū Avalokan" (in *Limbḍīnā Jain Jñānbhaṇḍārnī Hastalikhit Prationū Sūcipatra*, ed. Muni Caturvijay [Āgamoday Samiti 58, Bombay: Āgamoday Samiti, 1928]), 3, n. 5.

[11] Ratnamandiragaṇi, *Upadeśa Taraṅgiṇī*, 140, quoted in K. C. Kasliwal, *Jaina Grantha Bhandars in Rajasthan* (Jaipur: Shri Digamber Jain Atishaya Kshetra Shri Mahaviriji, 1967), 8.

[12] C. D. Dalal, op. cit., 33. See also Puṇyavijay, op. cit., 3, n. 6, and Bhogilal J. Sandesara, *Literary Circle of Mahāmātya Vastupāla and its Contributions to Sanskrit Literature*, Singhi Jain Series 33 (Bombay: Singhi Jain Shastra Sikshapitha and Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1953), 38.

[13] These locally published books tend not to find their way into the broader bookselling market, which is why so many Jain texts published in this century do not appear in North American or European libraries.

[14] For a discussion of the establishment of the library at Jaisalmer, and the security of Jaisalmer relative to that of Pāṭaṇ, see Lalchandra Bhagvandas Gandhi, "Prastāvanā," to C. D. Dalal's *A Catalogue of Manuscripts in the Jain Bhandars at Jesalmere*, Gaekwad's Oriental Series 21 (Baroda: Central Library, 1921), 11.

[15] Dalal, *Pattan Catalogue* (see note 8), 40.

[16] Ibid., 35.

[17] Muni Puṇya Vijaya, *Catalogue of Manuscripts in Shri Hemachandracharya Jain Jnanamandira Patan*, part 1 (Pāṭaṇ: Hemacandrācārya Jain Jñānmandir, 1972); and Muni Puṇyavijaya, compiler, and Muni Jambūvijaya, editor, *Catalogue of the Manuscripts of Pāṭaṇa Jain Bhaṇḍāra*, parts I, II, and IV, Shree Shwetambar Murtipujak Jain Boarding Series 1 and 3 (Ahmedabad: Sharadaben Chimkanbhai Educational Research Centre, 1991).

[18] The dates are all in the Vikram Saṁvat (v.s.) system, which is for the most part 56 years ahead of the Christian calendar. Thus 1995 C.E. = 2051 v.s.

[19] For a discussion of the ways in which the ritual and performative uses of texts provide us with a different 'canon' of texts than do more traditional considerations of orthodoxy and normativity, see John E. Cort, "Śvetāmbar Mūrtipūjak Jain Scripture in a Performative Context," in *Texts in Context: Traditional Hermeneutics in South Asia*, ed. Jeffrey R. Timm (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), 171–94.

Scholarship on the Jains has tended to ignore two basic questions: what texts did the mendicants actually read and use?—and therefore, what texts should scholars study in order to understand how the tradition was mediated to the mendicants? A study of the Jain libraries with these questions in mind, and especially of the collections of individual mendicants that have been incorporated into the libraries, would be most illuminating.

[20] Letter from G. Bühler to the Director of Public Instruction, Bombay, 20 August, 1873, in Archibald Edward Gough, ed., *Papers Relating to the Collection and Preservation of the Records of Ancient Sanskrit Literature in India* (Calcutta: Superintendent of Government Printing, 1878), 100.

[21] Peter Peterson, *Detailed Report of Operations in Search of Sanskrit Mss. in the Bombay Circle, August 1882–March 1883* (Bombay: Society's Library, Town Hall; London: Trübner & Co., 1883), 57.

> Something was said in my First Report of the strange character of the place, as we then saw it, where for generations these Cambay books have lain undisturbed in their coffin-like boxes. This room was worse. The first thing to catch my eye was a square piece of white cloth extended over the roof exactly above the place where I was to sit. I might have thought it a canopy of honour, had not its real purpose been soon apparent. That part of the roof, and every part of the roof, was covered without an interstice, with bats, hanging down from the rafters, and fastening—so it seemed at least—all their myriad eyes upon me. I sat in that noisome room for four mortal days doing my best to forget the bats, and get on with the work before me.[22]

Many Jain pilgrimage shrines still have secret cellars where, in times of political instability, images, ornaments, manuscripts, and other valuables could be stored for safe-keeping. These rooms were attached to Jain monasteries (*upāśray*) or temples, or on occasion to ordinary houses. Individual manuscripts might contain a single text in just a few pages, a single text of many pages, or as many as several dozen texts, which might or might not be closely related in terms of content. Most extant manuscripts are on paper, with older ones being on palm-leaf, and an occasional one on cloth. Unlike Brāhmaṇical manuscripts, Jain manuscripts tend to be of a fairly uniform size, paper manuscripts being roughly 9 to 12 inches wide by 4 to 6 inches high, with 10 inches by 4 inches being the norm.[23] Palmleaf manuscripts tend to be wider but less high, and vary somewhat more in size. C. D. Dalal notes that the extant Pāṭaṇ palmleaf manuscripts range in size from 36" by 2½" to 4½" by 1½".[24] Bundles of texts were sometimes tied together and covered by cloth, or stored in well-built, fairly air-tight wooden boxes roughly one-foot tall. To protect the manuscripts from insects, they were sometimes stored with chips of fragrant wood, and sometimes dusted with red arsenic powder. After working for a day with such manuscripts, one can easily understand the fate that befell the inquisitive monks in Umberto Eco's *The Name of the Rose*!

Management of the manuscript collections was of two kinds, either congregational or individual. The term for a Jain congregation is *saṅgh*. But *saṅgh* can refer to any of several different types of congregation. At its broadest, *saṅgh* refers to the entire Jain congregation of a town, while at its narrowest it refers to the congregation of a neighborhood, centered around the neighborhood temple. In between are *saṅghs* comprised of the lay adherents of one of the mendicant orders (*gacch*).[25] A manuscript collection might be under the control of a *saṅgh* of any of these sizes. In practical terms, *saṅgh* control really meant control by the leading laymen of the *saṅgh*, although mendicants could exercise more or less control depending on individual charisma. In the case of larger *saṅghs*, this lay control often involved the Nagarśeṭh, the heritary Jain mayor of Pāṭaṇ, and the Jain members of the Pañcāyat, the ruling council of Pāṭaṇ. This was the case, for example, with the *bhaṇḍārs* in Jaisalmer, as described by S. R. Bhandarkar:

> At present the Bhandar is entirely in the charge of the Panches (or trustees). In the case of such Bhandars at Jaisalmer and elsewhere I generally found that each Panch (or individual trustee) put on his own padlock and kept his key, so that the Bhandars could not be opened unless all the keys were brought together. Under these circumstances it would happen that a Bhandar could not be opened even if there should be a single dissident Panch against that being done, unless his padlock were to be forced open.[26]

Up until the early decades of the twentieth century, the actual ownership of many of the manuscript collections was in the hands of specific mendicants who resided permanently in their monasteries. These mendicants, known as *yatis*, did not take the full-fledged mendicant vows of non-possession (*aparigraha*), and so could legally possess monasteries and manuscripts. R. G. Bhandarkar, for example, reports that in Pāṭaṇ each *bhaṇḍār* "is the property of the *Gachchha* and is in the charge of the prominent lay-members of the sect. When, however, a priest [*yati*] makes an Upāśraya his permanent residence, the library is always in his charge and practically he is its owner."[27] Similarly Bühler describes the *bhaṇḍār* of the Khartar Gacch, which Tod described as being under the management of the Nagarśeṭh and the Pañcāyat,[28] as being under the control of the Pañcāyat and the Śrīpūjya, or head *yati*, and not until the Śrīpūjya returned from a tour in Rajasthan was Bühler able to gain access to the collection.[29]

The institution of the *yati* has largely disappeared from the Jain community as part of a broad-ranging reform of mendicant and lay practice over the past century. Part of this reform involved lawsuits between lay *saṅghs* and *yatis* concerning the possession of manuscripts, in part driven by instances of *yatis* selling manuscripts to foreign scholars and other interested parties.[30] While the courts sided with the *yatis*, the withdrawal of lay support for the *yati* institution has resulted in most of the manuscript collections coming under the control of lay *saṅghs*. C. D. Dalal, who worked on the Pāṭaṇ collections in 1915, reported that by that date all the *bhaṇḍārs* were in the hands of laymen, although he was unable to see one collection because its *yati* owner had hidden it.

Looking at the history of the Pāṭaṇ collections, most of which are now part of the Hemacandra Jñān Bhaṇḍār, shows examples of all of these ownership patterns.[31] Through the early years of this century, the manuscripts that are now in the Hemacandra Bhaṇḍār were in fact spread among more than a dozen different collections. The consolidation of the manuscript collections and the construction of the new *bhaṇḍār* was part of the above-mentioned reform movement. The reformist sentiment was expressed very clearly, for example, in a 1905 article written by Kalyanji Padamji Shah of Radhanpur in *The Jain Swetamber Conference Herald*, the main organ of the reformists, entitled "The Problem of the Day." In this article he stated: "The question for solution stands thus: How to release and diffuse our sacred lore at present confined in dark and stinking cellars to the care of heaps of dust and corroding insects."[32]

[22] Peter Peterson, *A Third Report of Operations in Search of Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Bombay Circle, April 1884–March 1886* (Bombay: Society's Library, Town Hall; London: Trubner & Co., 1887), 30.

[23] For a discussion and photographs of the preparation of the ink and the copying of a manuscript, see Eberhard Fischer and Jyotindra Jain, *Art and Rituals: 2500 Years of Jainism*, tr. Jutta Jain-Neubauer (New Delhi: Sterling, 1977), 12–13 and plates 101–3. See also Saryu Doshi, *Masterpieces of Jain Painting* (Bombay: Marg, 1985), 28–29.

[24] Dalal, ibid., 41.

[25] On the mendicant orders among the Śvetāmbar Mūrtipūjaks, see John E. Cort, "The Śvetāmbar Mūrtipūjak Jain Mendicant," *Man*, n.s., 26 (1991): 651–71.

[26] Shridhar R. Bhandarkar, *Report of a Second Tour in Search of Sanskrit Manuscripts made in Rajputana and Central India in 1904–5 and 1905–6* (Bombay: Government Central Press, 1907), 11.

[27] Ramkrishna Gopal Bhandarkar, *Report on the Search for Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Bombay Presidency during the Year 1883–84* (Bombay: Government Central Press, 1887), 1.

[28] Lieutenant-Colonel James Tod, *Travels in Western India* (London: Wm. H. Allen and Co., 1839), 233.

[29] G. Bühler, *Report on Sanskrit Mss., 1874–75* (Bombay: Director of Public Instruction, 1875), 6.

[30] An extreme example was mentioned by Bühler, who in 1869 received a number of manuscripts from a *yati*, who "asked in return nothing but a railway-guide—a request which I readily granted." Report of G. Bühler dated July 5, 1869, in A. E. Gough, op. cit., 51.

[31] Information on the collections comes from my own study of the collection, but more importantly from the following published sources: C. D. Dalal, *A Descriptive Catalogue of Manuscripts in the Jain Bhandars of Pattan*, vol. 1, ed. Lalchandra Bhagawandas Gandhi, Gaekwad's Oriental Series 76 (Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1937); Mohanlāl Dalīcand Desāī, "Pāṭaṇnā Jain Bhaṇḍāro," *Jain Swetamber Conference Herald* 12.1 (January 1916), 28–32, and 12.2 (February 1916), 56–59; Muni Puṇyavijay, "Pāṭaṇnā Jñānbhaṇḍāro," *Pāṭaṇ Jain Maṇḍal Suvarṇ Jayanti* (Bombay: Pāṭaṇ Jain Maṇḍal, 1964), 241–43; Muni Puṇyavijay, *Catalogue of Manuscripts in Shri Hemachandracharya Jain Jnanamandira, Patan*, part I: *Paper Manuscripts* (Pāṭaṇ: Śrī Hemacandrācārya Jaina Jñānamandira, 1972); and Muni Puṇyavijay, compiler, and Muni Jambūvijay, editor, *Catalogue of the Manuscripts of Pāṭaṇa Jain Bhaṇḍāra*, 4 parts in 3 volumes, Shree Shwetambar Murtipujak Jain Boarding Series 1–3 (Ahmedabad: Sharadaben Chimanbhai Educational Research Centre, 1991).

For good overviews on the location and cultural significance of Jain manuscript collections, see the following: anon. "Jñānbhaṇḍārno Paricay," *Jain Yug*, n.s., 2.6 (1959): 25–29; Banārsīdās Jain, "Panjāb ke Jain Bhaṇḍārō kā Mahatva," in *Jainacharya Shri Atmanand Centenary Commemoration Volume*, ed. Mohanlal Dalichand Desai (Bombay: Jainacharya Shri Atmanand Janma-Shatabdi Smarak Samiti, 1936), Hindi section, 157–68; Kanubhāī Vra. Śeṭh, "Gujarātnā Hastprat-Granthbhaṇḍāro," *Parab* 10 (1980): 668–74; Agarcand Nāhṭā and Bhanvarlāl Nāhṭā, *Bīkāner Jain Lekh Saṅgrah* (Kalkattā: Nāhṭā Bradars, 1956), 61–69; Ludwig Alsdorf, "Neues aus alten Jainabibliotheken," in *Beitrage zur indischen Philologie und Altertumskunde: Walther Schubring zum 70. Geburtstag dargebracht von der Deutschen Indologie*, Alt- und Neu-Indische Studien 7 (Hamburg: Cram, de Gruyter & Co., 1951), 59–65 (reprinted in Ludwig Alsdorf, *Kleine Schriften*, ed. Albrecht Wezler [Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1974], 160–66); K. C. Kasliwal, op. cit.; and the following articles by Muni Puṇyavijay in *Jñānāñjali: Pūjya Muni Śrī Puṇyavijayjī Abhivādan Granth*, ed. Paṇṇyās Ramnikvijay et. al. (Baroda: Śrī Sāgar Gacch Jain Upāśray): "Jñānbhaṇḍāroni Samṛddhi," Gujarati section, 6–16; "Āpṇi Adṛśya thati Lekhankalā ane tenā Sādhno," Gujarati section, 39–52; "Jñānbhaṇḍārō par ek Dṛṣṭipāt," Hindi section, 1–18. See also the reports on the searches for Sanskrit manuscripts by R. G. Bhandarkar, S. R. Bhandarkar, Georg Bühler, F. Kielhorn, and Peter Peterson cited elsewhere in these notes.

[32] Kalyanji Padamji Shah, "The Problem of the Day," *The Jain Swetamber Conference Herald* 1.4 (April, 1905), 69.

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On the one hand, a number of monks undertook to collect, study, and catalogue manuscript collections. In Pāṭaṇ this was originally the work of Pravartak Kāntivijay (d. 1942), assisted by his disciple Paṅnyās Caturvijay (d. 1940), although the bulk of the work was done by Caturvijay's disciple, the great Muni Puṇyavijay (1896–1971), who catalogued the collections of Jaisalmer, Chāṇi, the Śāntināth Bhaṇḍār in Cambay, and the L. D. Institute in Ahmedabad, in addition to cataloguing the Pāṭaṇ collection.[33] Support for this work was forthcoming from the laity, and resolutions advocating manuscript preservation and cataloguing were regularly passed at the biennial conventions of the Śvetāmbar Jain Conference. In the case of Pāṭaṇ there was also pressure from the government. Pāṭaṇ was part of the northern district of Baroda State, and it was in part through the influence of the Gaekwad's government that Western scholars first gained access to the main collections, and that C. D. Dalal from the Baroda Oriental Institute was able to prepare a preliminary catalogue of the manuscripts. Dalal warned of the danger of the destruction of manuscripts by white ants, and so the Baroda government set up a committee to recommend proper steps for the preservation and study of the manuscripts. While the Jains of Pāṭaṇ resisted the suggestion that the manuscripts should be shifted to Baroda and incorporated into the Oriental Institute's collection, they did agree to arrange for the manuscripts' preservation. This effort also gained the public support of Ācārya Vijay Vallabhsūri (1871–1954), one of the leaders of the reform movement. The bulk of the different collections was incorporated into one single collection. A large new building was constructed to house the collection, and the new library was named after Pāṭaṇ's most famous monk, the medieval polymath Hemacandra (1089–1172), who had been known as the *kalikālasarvajña*, "the Omniscient of the Dark Age," on account of the breadth of his scholarship. This building was inaugurated on 7 April 1939, by K. M. Munshi, then president of the Gujarat Sahitya Parishad and Home Minister of Bombay State.[34] Most of the money—Rs 2,100 in cash and Rs 51,000 in land—came from a single donor, Hemcand Mohanlāl, in the memory of his father Mohanlāl Moticand. This large building is in the heart of a Jain area in the middle of Pāṭaṇ, next to the most important Jain temple of Pañcāsar Pārśvanāth, and surrounded by many other Jain institutions and residential neighborhoods. It stands on a raised plinth for protection against flooding. The building contains a front reading room and three manuscript storage rooms, each closed by a heavy metal bank-vault door. The manuscripts themselves are stored in specially designed airtight wooden boxes which are kept inside locked metal cabinets.

The largest of the collections incorporated into the Hemacandra Bhaṇḍār is the Śrī Saṅgh Bhaṇḍār, which was under the supervision of the Pāṭaṇ Jain Saṅgh. As of 1915, when Dalal surveyed the Pāṭaṇ collections, it was under the management of a citywide Jain trust, Śeṭh Dharamcand Abhecand Peḍhī. In practical terms, this meant that the collection was under the control of the Jain Nagarśeṭh, together with the Jain members of the Pañcāyat. At that time the Śrī Saṅgh Bhaṇḍār also contained a smaller collection formerly under the control of a neighborhood *saṅgh*, that of Limbḍī Pāḍo, and a few manuscripts from the private collection of a layman, Vastā Māṇek. The bulk of this latter collection had been given by Vastā Māṇek to Vakīl (lawyer) Lehrubhāī Ḍāhyābhāī, and upon his death was deposited in the Sāgar Bhaṇḍār.

Three of the collections now in the Hemacandra Bhaṇḍār are examples of collections managed by a *saṅgh* affiliated with a mendicant *gacch*. Vāḍī Pārśvanāth was the one temple in Pāṭaṇ affiliated with the Khartar Gacch. The temple of Vāḍī Pārśvanāth was consecrated in 1596, and its foundational inscription is an important document in the history of the Khartar Gacch.[35] The collection in the Vāḍī Pārśvanāth Bhaṇḍār was established earlier than the present temple. Most of the manuscripts are paper copies of earlier palm-leaf manuscripts, many of them in Jaisalmer, copied in the years 1425–35 at the orders of Jinabhadrasūri.[36] This collection includes many important logic and Advaita Vedāntin texts copied on paper manuscripts in the first half of the fifteenth century. This was the collection described by Colonel James Tod, who visited Pāṭaṇ in 1822.[37]

Another collection under the control of a *saṅgh* affiliated with a *gacch* was that of the Sāgar Gacch (this *gacch*, more properly speaking, is an informal branch of the Tapā Gacch), although earlier Bhandarkar described it as under the control of Yati Rūpsāgar. Dalal noted that this collection also contained 108 manuscripts that were formerly the property of a Sāgar Gacch *yati*, Bhāv Sāgar, as well as the collection of the layman Makā Modī. 75 palmleaf manuscripts from this collection were sold to F. Kielhorn in 1880–81 for inclusion in the Bombay Government collection, which now is the collection of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute in Pune.[38] As mentioned above, for a time this collection also housed that of Vakīl Lehrubhāī Ḍāhyābhāī. A third such collection was that of the Tapā Gacch, also known as the Āgalī Śerī ("Front Street") Bhaṇḍār, after the name of the neighborhood in which it was located. Pāṭaṇ tradition has it that this collection was established by Ācārya Vijay Devsūri (1578–1657), head of the Tapā Gacch in the first half of the seventeenth century.[39] According to Dalal, an important part of this collection is a set of manuscripts of the Jain Siddhānta (the Śvetāmbara 'canon') and related commentaries, copied at the expense of a millionaire layman, Chaddu Śāha, at the beginning of the sixteenth century V.E. (i.e., mid-fifteenth century C.E.).[40] Both Bühler and Bhandarkar referred to another smaller Tapā Gacch collection in the same neighborhood, that was established by Rūpvijay (d. 1849) of Ahmedabad.[41] I assume that this collection was later incorporated into the Tapā Gacch collection.

R. G. Bhandarkar's description of the Āgalī Śerī library indicates well the way in which collections were often aggregates of smaller collections. Part of this collection had belonged to a layman, Śāntidās Devkaraṇ, and had been catalogued in 1797. A second group had belonged to the mendicant Gaṅgāvijaygaṇi, and been catalogued in 1695. A third collection, catalogued in 1797, had belonged to the mendicant Paṅnyās Satyavijay. A fourth collection had belonged to Śrīpūjya Jinendrasūri.[42] A fifth collection, also catalogued in 1797, had been left in Śāntidās Devkaraṇ's house by the *yati* Mohanvijay. A further collection, catalogued in 1805, had belonged to the layman (or possibly, though less likely, a *yati*) Dīpcand Hemcand. A seventh collection, again catalogued in 1797, had belonged to an unknown Vijay *yati*. Lastly, there were three other collections belonging to unknown laymen, one catalogued in 1780, and one in 1804.

One small collection, that from Aduvasī Pāḍo, of 114 manuscripts, is an example of a collection under the control of a neighborhood *saṅgh*. The collection in Khetarvasī Pāḍo is a neighborhood collection that is still separated from the Hemacandra Bhaṇḍār. Bhandarkar described it as under the management of one Yati Ratanvijay, and said that the *yati* had moved many of the manuscripts to Ahmedabad, where he lived. This is a collection of 76 old and rare palm-leaf manuscripts. Current plans are to incorporate this collection into the Hemacandra Bhaṇḍār, but at the moment it is frozen in Khetarvasī due to a court investigation into eleven stolen manuscripts.

Another collection that is separate from the Hemacandra Bhaṇḍār represents the control of a *saṅgh* that is both a neighborhood *saṅgh* and a mendicant-lineage affiliated *saṅgh*. This is the collection of 3,206 manuscripts in Bhābhā Pāḍo, the one neighborhood *saṅgh* in Pāṭaṇ affiliated with the nearly defunct Vimal branch of the Tapā Gacch. Most of this collection was formerly in the nearby village of Kuṅgher, from where it was transferred to Pāṭaṇ. The current condition of this collection

[33] The Jaisalmer and L. D. catalogues were published by the L. D. Institute in Ahmedabad, and the Cambay catalogue in the Gaekwad's Oriental Series in Baroda. To the best of my knowledge, the Chāṇi catalogue has not been published, although the hand-written copy of the catalogue is in the L. D. Institute.

For a brief biography of Muni Puṇyavijay, see Umakant P. Shah, "Life and Works of Agama Prabhakar Muni Punyavijayji," in *Jñānāñjali*, ed. Ramnikvijay (see note 31), *Abhidān* section, 89–96.

[34] For a description of the opening ceremonies and the background to the construction of the new building, see P. C. Divanji, "Correspondence: Resurrection of the Jnana-Bhandars at Pāṭaṇ and Appreciation of the Work of the Jain Saint Hemacandra," *New Indian Antiquary* 2 (1939): 121–25.

[35] See G. Bühler, "Prasasti of the Temple of Vadipura-Parsvanatha at Pattana," *Epigraphica Indica* 1 (1892): 319–24; and B. J. Sandesara, "Inscription of the Jaina Temple of Vāḍī Pārśvanātha at Pāṭaṇ and Genealogy of the Teachers of the Kharatara Gaccha," *Journal of the Oriental Institute* 25 (1976): 393–98. For further discussion of the temple itself, see John E. Cort, "Connoisseurs and Devotees: Lockwood de Forest and

The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Jain Temple Ceiling," *Orientations* 25.3 (March 1994): 68–74.

[36] Muni Puṇyavijay describes this collection as a "new edition" (*navī āvṛtti*) of the Jaisalmer collection. Muni Puṇyavijay, "Pāṭaṇnā Jñānbhaṇḍāro," (see note 31), 242.

[37] Lieutenant-Colonel James Tod, *Travels in Western India, Embracing a Visit to the Sacred Mounts of the Jains, and the Most Celebrated Shrines of Hindu Faith between Rajpootana and the Indus; with an Account of the Ancient City of Nehrwalla* (London: Wm. H. Allen and Co., 1839), 232–34.

[38] M. D. Desāī, op. cit.; Dalal, op. cit., 36; and F. Kielhorn, *Report on the Search for Sanskrit Mss. in the Bombay Presidency during the Year 1880–81* (Bombay: Government Central Book Depot, 1881).

[39] Muni Puṇyavijay, "Pāṭaṇnā Jñānbhaṇḍāro" (see note 31), 242.

[40] Dalal, op. cit., 36.

[41] G. Bühler, op. cit. (note 29), 4; and Ramkrishna Gopal Bhandarkar, op. cit. (note 27), 1.

[42] A *śrīpūjya* was the leader of an order of *yatis*.

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indicates some of the frustrations that can await those scholars who want to work with traditional manuscript collections. The only key to the *bhaṇḍār* is in a bank safe deposit box in Pāṭaṇ, which can only be opened when two trustees come from Bombay, where they reside. This *bhaṇḍār* had not been opened for several decades until Muni Jambūvijay, through his personal mendicant charisma, convinced the trustees to come to Pāṭaṇ so he could inspect the manuscripts in the course of preparing the recently published comprehensive catalogue of the Pāṭaṇ Bhaṇḍārs. This is reminiscent of a similar situation in the Jaisalmer described by S. R. Bhandarkar, who in 1905 inspected one *bhaṇḍar* "which had last been opened for the inspection of Dr. Bühler more than thirty years ago and had remained locked up ever since."[43]

A similar collection was that of Saṅghvī Pāḍo, which also consisted largely of palm-leaf manuscripts. This collection was in the monastery of the Loḍhī Pośāḷ branch of the Tapā Gacch, a lineage of *yatis*, but was under the management of a lay family in the neighborhood. Dalal noted that the collection had been periodically catalogued and organized by the *yatis*, and then more recently by Pravartak Kāntivijay. At the request of Muni Jambūvijay, it was given to the Hemacandra Bhaṇḍār in 1976, and a new catalogue of the collection prepared by Muni Jambūvijay.[44] This collection includes some twenty manuscripts of important Jain 'canonical' texts and commentaries, copied between the years 1381 and 1433 at the instructions (*upadeśa*) of two successive heads of the Tapā Gacch, Ācārya Devasundarasūri (1340–1404) and his disciple Ācārya Somasundarasūri (1374–1443).[45]

Other collections represent those of individuals. The collection of Yati Himmatvijay consisted of 72 manuscripts, mostly on architecture (*śilpa śāstra*), which he had collected for his own use. A large collection of 1,285 manuscripts was formerly in the possession of a Jaisalmer Khartar Gacch *yati*, Ācārya Vṛddhicandrasūri, but was transferred to Pāṭaṇ at the request of Muni Puṇyavijay. Bhandarkar mentioned a similar small collection in the hands of another Pāṭaṇ *yati*, Rājvijay Dayāvijay, which later was either removed from Pāṭaṇ or incorporated into another collection. Non-resident, non-*yati* monks also developed personal collections, especially reformist monks who in their constant travels urged lay followers to donate manuscripts in their personal possession so they could be made available to the larger public. Examples of these were the collections of 2,013 manuscripts collected by Pravartak Kāntivijay, 66 manuscripts collected by Ācārya Vijay Māṇikyasūri (these were later kept under the control of the neighborhood *saṅgh* in Mahālakṣmi Pāḍo, and is described as the Mahālakṣmi Pāḍo Bhaṇḍār by both Dalal and Desāī), and 1,352 manuscripts collected by Ācārya Vijay Vallabhsūri in the Panjab.[46]

The relocation of two collections from Jaisalmer and the Panjab indicates the extent to which *bhaṇḍārs* have been mobile over the centuries. Two other collections currently in Pāṭaṇ also came from elsewhere. The Śubhvīr collection of 2,511 manuscripts came from Ahmedabad at the request of Puṇyavijay, while another collection of 407 manuscripts was bought in Bhuj, Kacch. This collection consisted mostly of poetry and poetic theory in Braj, Rajasthani, and Gujarati, and had long been famous among those interested in learning the techniques of traditional poetry. This collection was in the monastery of the *yatis* of the Kuśaḷ Śākhā in Bhuj, who were also spiritual preceptors to the Maharao of Kacch in the seventeenth through nineteenth centuries. When Muni Puṇyavijay heard that the then-presiding *yati* was interested in selling this collection, he arranged for it to be bought and transferred to Pāṭaṇ.[47]

Desāī and Dalal mention a collection that went in the other direction—that of Yati Lāvaṇyavijay. Desāī says that it was transferred to Rādhanpur, while Dalal says it was transferred to Pālanpur and most likely burnt in a fire there.[48]

[43] S. R. Bhandarkar, op. cit., 12.

[44] Muni Jambūvijay, [untitled] (Pāṭaṇ: Śri Hemacandrācārya Jain Jñān Mandir, n.d.). Copies of this catalogue are in the collections of both the Library of Congress and the Center for Research Libraries. This information is also included in part IV, pp. 208–91, of the recent comprehensive catalogue (see note 31).

[45] Somasundarasūri is also famous for consecrating the images of the famous Dharaṇacaturmukhavihara Jain temple of Rāṇakpur in 1440.

[46] A recent example of such a collection is the large library being organized in Kobā (between Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar) under the inspiration of Ācārya Padmasāgarsūri of the Tapā Gacch.

[47] Bühler mentions this collection in his 1874–75 report (ibid., 2–3), and says that it consisted of 614 manuscripts. For a discussion of the tradition of poetry among Kacch *yatis*, see Dulerāy Kārāṇi, "Kacchnā Rājkavi Yatiśrī Kanakkuśalji," in *Śri Mahāvir Jain Vidyālay Suvarnmahotsav Granth*, ed. N. Upadhye et al. (Bombay: Śri Mahāvīr Jain Vidyālay, 1968), part I, Gujarati section, 124–29.

[48] Desāī, op. cit., Dalal, op. cit., 37.

The final collection in Pāṭaṇ was that of the *yatis* of the Pūrṇimā Gacch, who still own a monastery in Pāṭaṇ in Ḍhaṇḍher Vāḍo.[49] This collection consists of 701 paper manuscripts of fairly recent date, and of no great scholarly importance. But it was the source of great curiosity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, in large part because it was inaccessible to scholars. Popular tradition had it that the *bhaṇḍār* of the great Hemacandra was still extant in Pāṭaṇ, but none of the collections investigated had manuscripts from that time. Tod thought that this was the collection to which his *yati* assistant gained entrance, although as mentioned above this was actually the Khartar Bhaṇḍār attached to the Vāḍī Pārśvanāth temple. Bühler was under the same mistaken impression later in the century in 1874, when he said that the "Śrīpūj of the Kharataragachha . . . together with the Panch [*pañcāyat*] is the keeper of Hemachandra's Bhandār."[50] In fact, the person to whom Bühler referred was not of the Khartar Gacch, but the *yati* of the Pūrṇimā Gacch, Svarūpcand. This is clear from the description of Ramkrishna Gopal Bhandarkar, who came to Pāṭaṇ less than a decade later, in 1883. Bhandarkar said, "Svarūpachandra Yati, who had charge of the Bhāṇḍār said to have originally belonged to Hemachandra . . . was as immoveable as he was in 1874–75, when Dr. Bühler wished him to show his manuscripts to him."[51] Peter Peterson reported a similar failure another decade later, in 1893.[52] This misconception was cleared up only by C. D. Dalal, who firstly was clear that the collection in question belonged to the Pūrṇimā Gacch, not the Khartar Gacch, and secondly showed that Hemacandra had belonged to yet a third *gacch*, the Pūrṇatalla Gacch. Dalal further reported that following Svarūpcand's death there was a lawsuit between his successor and the *saṅgh* concerning the ownership of the monastery and the manuscript collection, and as of 1915 the location of the collection was unknown, as it had been hidden by the *yati*.[53] This situation was also reported by Desāī, writing in 1916, who added that many of the manuscripts had been sold to a British agent in Ahmedabad. Eventually, however, after the courts found in favor of the *yati*—that he was the legal owner of the manuscripts—he gave the manuscripts to the Hemacandra Bhaṇḍār.

Donald Johnson has succinctly described the process by which the Jain manuscript collections came to the attention of Western scholars. The subsequent investigation of these collections has resulted in the publication of many hundreds of critical and semi-critical editions of texts, both by limited circulation Jain-funded text series, and more visible series such as the Bombay Sanskrit and Prakrit Series, Gaekwad's Oriental Series and the L. D. Series. The texts have significantly augmented our understanding of the social, royal, intellectual, and artistic history of western India. Since the Jains have been quite catholic in their attitudes towards the collection and retention of texts, the *bhaṇḍār* collections have also included valuable Brāhmaṇical and Buddhist texts that would otherwise have been lost to posterity.[54] Most of what we know about western Indian painting comes from the study of the many illustrated manuscripts in the *bhaṇḍārs*. In addition, over the centuries the *bhaṇḍārs* have become the repositories for other works of art, such as illustrated scrolls, paintings on cloth, painted or embroidered book covers, painted wooden manuscript boxes, devotional images in stone, metal, and crystal, and other sculptures.[55]

Many of the Jain collections have been catalogued and the catalogues published, but in the case of Pāṭaṇ the cataloguing history has been a checkered one. The first extensive catalogue was prepared by C. D. Dalal of the Baroda Oriental Institute, who worked in Pāṭaṇ in 1915. He died, however, before publishing his catalogue. His descriptive catalogue of the palm-leaf manuscripts was finally edited by Pandit L. B. Gandhi of the Oriental

[49] I have discussed this monastery and its *yatis* in my dissertation (see note 2, above), 102.

[50] G. Bühler, ibid., 6.

[51] Ramkrishna Gopal Bhandarkar, *Report on the Search for Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Bombay Presidency during the Year 1883–84* (Bombay: Government Central Press, 1887), 2.

[52] Peter Peterson, *A Fourth Report of Operations in Search of Sanskrit Mss. in the Bombay Circle, April 1886–March 1892* (Bombay: Society's Library, Town Hall; London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1894), 2.

[53] Dalal, op. cit., 38.

[54] Many of the manuscripts for Brāhmaṇical texts published in the aforementioned series came from Jain *bhaṇḍārs*. For examples of Buddhist materials preserved in the Jain *bhaṇḍārs*, see Raniero Gnoli, ed., *The Pramāṇavārttikam of Dharmakīrti: The First Chapter with the Autocommentary*, Serie Orientale Roma 23 (Rome: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1960), which was edited from a 16th-century v.s. paper manuscript in the Bhābhā Pāḍo *bhaṇḍār*; and Padmanabh S. Jaini, "Vasudhārā-dhāraṇi: A Buddhist Work in Use Among the Jainas of Gujarat," in *Śri Mahāvīr Jain Vidyālay Suvarṇmahotsav Granth*, part I, English section, 30–45.

[55] For an example of the range of artistic treasures to be found in *bhaṇḍārs*, see Umakant P. Shah, ed., *Treasures of Jaina Bhaṇḍārs*, L. D. Series 69 (Ahmedabad: L. D. Institute of Indology, 1978), the catalogue of a 1975 exhibition in Ahmedabad.

Institute, and published in the Gaekwad's Oriental Series in 1937 as *A Descriptive Catalogue of Manuscripts in the Jain Bhandars of Pattan*, vol. I. The second volume of this catalogue was to have covered the many more paper manuscripts, but was never published. Muni Puṇyavijay worked for many years, from 1928 through 1943, organizing and preparing a catalogue for the Pāṭaṇ collection. Volume one of his catalogue, which covers the paper manuscripts from 13 of the collections, was published by the Hemacandra Jñān Mandir in 1972 as *Catalogue of Manuscripts in Shri Hemachandracharya Jain Jnanamandira, Patan*, pt. I: *Paper Manuscripts*. It is distributed through the L. D. Institute of Indology in Ahmedabad, but few people know this, since it was never included in the lists of L. D. publications. Typesetting of the second volume, which was to have covered the remaining three *bhaṇḍārs*, as well as transcription of all of the many manuscript colophons, was begun by the staff of the L. D. Institute but never finished, due to a dispute between the institutions. In the meantime, Muni Jambūvijay prepared a small catalogue of the palm-leaf manuscripts from the Saṅghvī Pāḍo *bhaṇḍār* that was given to the Hemacandra Bhaṇḍār in 1976; this untitled catalogue is available only through the Bhaṇḍār in Pāṭaṇ. In the late 1980s and early 1990s Muni Jambūvijay worked to reorganize the Pāṭaṇ *bhaṇḍārs*. He re-edited the 1972 catalogue as well as the unpublished volume 2 (except for the colophons), to which were added Puṇyavijay's catalogue of the manuscripts in the Bhābhā Pāḍo *bhaṇḍār*, Jambūvijay's list of 268 paper manuscripts given to the *bhaṇḍār* subsequent to Puṇyavijay's list, an alphabetical index of all 20,035 paper manuscripts, and Jambūvijay's catalogue (complete with alphabetical index) of all the palm-leaf manuscripts. This was recently published in three volumes by the Sharadben Chimanbhai Educational Research Centre in Ahmedabad as *Catalogue of the Manuscripts of Pāṭaṇa Jain Bhaṇḍāra*.[56]

We have seen that the ownership of Jain manuscript patterns formerly followed many different patterns. Some collections were managed by the lay congregations, at the citywide level by the Nagarśeth and the Pañcāyat, and at the neighborhood level by the leaders of the local congregation. In one such case, that of Saṅghvī Pāḍo, a local collection was entrusted to the hereditary management of one family. Other collections were the personal property of resident *yatis*, but with the withdrawal of lay support for the institution of the *yati*, and the resultant extinction of *yati* lineages, these collections also came under the control of congregations. Still other collections were the personal property of laymen. In some cases these were then given to a congregation upon the layman's death by his survivors, much as many American museum collections have been built up as descendants donate the collections of departed parents, aunts, and uncles. In other cases these private collections were turned over to public management at the urging of charismatic mendicants. We have also seen the mobility of these collections, with collections from Ahmedabad, Jaisalmer, Kacch, and Panjab being brought to Pāṭaṇ, collections moving from location to location within Pāṭaṇ, and other collections presumably being taken from Pāṭaṇ to other cities. A study of the colophons of the manuscripts further confirms the mobility of texts, as many of the texts currently in Pāṭaṇ were originally copied in towns and villages throughout western India, and texts copied in Pāṭaṇ are found in all the other major Jain manuscript collections.

The history of these collections further reveals a dramatic change that has occurred in the last one hundred years, as Western notions of public libraries and research institutions have come to dominance in India. Nowadays the vast majority of the handwritten manuscripts are found either in *bhaṇḍārs*, such as the Hemacandra Jñān Bhaṇḍār in Pāṭaṇ, which is managed by a registered public trust, or else in research institutions (themselves frequently affiliated with universities) such as the L. D. Institute of Indology in Ahmedabad, which is affiliated with Gujarat University.

It is ironic that at the same time as access to these manuscripts on the part of scholars has become easier, the need for the manuscripts in the Jain community itself has drastically decreased, with the advent of published editions of texts. These two factors may be related, as manuscripts have moved from being an essential part of the tradition, and therefore governed by active ritual, educational, and purity concerns, to being a marginal part of the tradition, relegated to the antiquarian interests of the equally marginal scholarly community. These published editions, of course, are themselves dependent upon the manuscripts. A visit to any Jain library indicates how marginal the manuscripts are to the ongoing Jain identity. Their condition is not unlike the condition of Western archives as described by Claude Lévi-Strauss in *La Pensée sauvage*: "we might say of archives that they are after all only pieces of paper. They need only all have been published, for our knowledge and condition to be totally unaffected were a cataclysm to destroy the originals."[57] Lévi-Strauss goes on, however, to indicate that while such a loss might be negligible at one intellectual level, at another it would be profound: "We should . . . feel this loss as an irreparable injury that strikes to the core of our being." Lévi-Strauss observes that archives, or in this case hand-written Jain manuscripts, provide our sense of the past with its "diachronic flavour" by putting us "in contact with pure historicity." One can more easily read a critical edition of a medieval text in a research library in Cambridge or Chicago, but the text in this form loses some of the numinous charge felt by the reader when reading a manuscript painstakingly copied by hand several centuries earlier.

Jains insist that a book, *any* book, should be treated with respect. Once a year, therefore, on the fifth day after the New Year, known as "Knowledge Fifth" (Jñān Pañcamī), Jains go to the libraries and *bhaṇḍārs* to worship both the knowledge contained in the manuscripts and the physical manuscripts themselves. Both modern printed books and older hand-written manuscripts are arranged in tiers on tables. Laity stand before the books with hands joined in a gesture of veneration, and sing vernacular hymns to Knowledge. Offerings of the sacred, charged sandalwood powder known as *vāskep* (as well as money) are made onto metal trays on the tables, and then, in an act sure to run shivers up the spine of any library archivist, the powder is sprinkled over the books and manuscripts themselves.[58]

The very books and manuscripts as physical objects are to be treated with respect and veneration, and disrespect is considered as an *aśātnā*, or moral fault. Once in Pāṭaṇ I was attending a complex temple ritual (*mahāpūjā*), to which I had brought along my own copy of the ritual manual in order better to follow the proceedings. When I placed the manual on the floor of the temple in order to take some photographs, a Jain woman became agitated and picked up the book. I said that there was no need for her to hold the book, but she replied that it must not be placed on the floor, for, as she put it in English, "It is a book. It is holy." What I had treated rather cavalierly as a collection of pieces of printed paper was to her an inherently charged and sacred object.

This sense of numinous power is accentuated when one realizes, after a day of working with manuscripts, that one's hands are covered with a fine, red layer of poisonous arsenic powder, reminding one of the observations of Rudolf Otto and Mircea Eliade that anything which is holy is also considered to be dangerous.[59] And this perhaps epitomizes the condition of the manuscript collections, or, as I prefer to translate *jñān bhaṇḍār*, the "knowledge warehouses," in contemporary Jain society. The Jains are and have been profoundly ambivalent in their attitude towards manuscripts and the powerful, salvific knowledge (*jñān*) contained therein. This knowledge is something to be preserved in libraries and worshipped in the abstract in rituals, but not necessarily something with which they expect people to have frequent contact. Manuscripts not only contain *jñān*, they also contain *vidyā*, a multivalent term that covers both the Western categories of science and magic—in other words, powerful and efficacious knowledge.[60] This holy power contained in the physical presence of the manuscripts accounts for the many references over the past century to the inaccessibility of Jain libraries. The manuscripts lie, in Peter Peterson's words, "undisturbed in their coffin-like boxes," or, in Kalyanji Padamji Shah's words, "confined in dark and stinking cellars to the care of heaps of dust and corroding insects."[61] I cannot help but be reminded of the scene at the end of the movie *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, in which the long-lost Ark of the Covenant is carefully nailed inside a box and wheeled into a vast, endless warehouse from which it will never return. The Jain manuscripts are revered, they are holy, and they are protected; but they are also to a significant extent locked away and ignored, for they are dangerous and taboo.

[56] The Pāṭaṇ *bhaṇḍār* also contains the extensive personal library of printed reference works collected and used by Muni Puṇyavijay. This invaluable reference library is also uncatalogued, and lying in boxes on the second floor of the *bhaṇḍār*.

[57] Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind* [no translator indicated] (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1966), 241–42.

[58] For more on the performance of Jñān Pañcamī, see Cort, *Liberation and Wellbeing* (note 2), 198–203.

[59] Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy*, tr. John W. Harvey (London: Oxford University Press, 1950); Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane*, tr. Willard Trask (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1959).

[60] The connection between manuscripts and power sometimes expresses itself more directly. D. D. Kosambi relates his frustration in seeking manuscripts for the preparation of his critical edition of Bhartṛhari's *Śatakatraya*, as in some cases owners refused to let him inspect manuscripts for fear that this would result in a diminution of the owner's temporal powers: "In one case, this was due to the fear of losing alchemical formulae which might have been hidden away in the mass of scrap paper by some ancestor; in several other cases, it was due to the fear of titles to property being proved defective by examination of the old bundles." D. D. Kosambi, *Śatakatrayādi-Subhāṣitasaṅgraha of Bhartṛhari*, Singhi Jain Series 23 (Bombay: Singhi Jaina Śāstra Śikṣāpiṭha and Bhāratiya Vidyā Bhavana, 1948), 10.

[61] Similarly Kosambi (loc. cit.) refers to manuscripts "being hidden away in private collections, [that] will be destroyed unused by the action of time, air, rain, mice, white ants and all other vermin except scholars."

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TRADE-BUDDHISM: MARITIME TRADE, IMMIGRATION, AND THE BUDDHIST LANDFALL IN EARLY JAPAN

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The conventional image of a state-driven Japanese conversion to Buddhism, from the top down, amidst a static Confucian empire inhabited by inert subsistence-level peasant villagers, obscures the extent to which Japan, prior to *circa* 700, was an immigrant society with pronounced maritime orientations. These oceanic interests connected Japan with the wider, still too little understood, world of trade and immigration that was actively bridging the distances between continental East Asia, the South Seas, and India. International trade spread both tangible and intangible commodities, including ideas, and served as the vehicle for the propagation of Buddhism. Japan, while occupying the far northeastern fringe of this old-world trading community, was swept up in the general Buddhist transformation.

THE EMERGING JAPANESE STATE, through the eighth century, was commercially underdeveloped even for its era. It was founded, moreover, upon an imported Chinese Imperial-Confucian vision of society, consisting largely of self-sufficient agricultural villages, coordinated and presided over by a small, ritual-bound, central governing elite.[1] Some scholars question, moreover, whether the Japanese economy was sufficiently developed even to support this simple agrarian imperial model.[2] Yet Buddhism came to Japanese shores at this time, propelled by vast, if not always very strong, economic currents that were flowing across maritime and continental Eurasia in the early centuries of the Christian era, from the Mediterranean world to India and China, and finally even brushing against Japan—for which the surviving evidence of Persian and other Western motifs on Japanese art objects from this period offers silent testimony.[3]

These larger commercial waves may have only just barely reached Japan at this time, but they exerted a decisive impact nonetheless. Their relative neglect in conventional histories of the period is attributable in part to their undeniably small scale, but also to the limited range of acceptable elite interests in traditional East Asian civilization. The world of merchants and tradesmen passed largely beneath the recorded notice of bureaucrats and literati, whose complacent view of the lives of commoners was confined largely to docile (or, sometimes, rebellious) peasant villagers. While this unitary Confucian high culture is itself a thing of no little beauty, there are too many unaccounted for strangers passing furtively between the lines of the official histories. Here, I wish to explore the degree to which the Buddhist transmission to Japan, and East Asia more generally, occurred beyond official notice or record, and was entangled with private and sometimes even illegal international commercial activity and population movements.

THE COMMERCIAL VECTORS OF EARLY BUDDHISM

Buddhism traveled to East Asia along established trade routes, and swelled the pre-existing volume of trade by itself creating new religious incentives for travel, and a demand for imported religious articles. Buddhism legitimated private commercial wealth as a vehicle for serving sacred needs through generous donations, and Buddhism lubricated foreign exchange by overcoming narrow local prejudice with a radically more cosmopolitan, international, perspective. The developing cult of Avalokiteśvara (Ch., Guanyin; J., Kannon) as the patron bodhisattva of mariners also gave the faithful courage to confront the inevitable perils of distant voyages.[4] Buddhism was thus in many ways conducive to the growth of trade—and trade to the spread of Buddhism.

In China Buddhism stimulated the practice of making pilgrimages—especially to Mañjuśrī's reputed abode in the Wutai 五台山 mountains—which in turn promoted the circulation of goods and ideas.[5] In 636, for example, the Sillan (Korean) monk Chajang 慈藏 had an (alleged) encounter with Mañjuśrī on Mt. Wutai, who bestowed upon Chajang a relic, valuable robe, and alms-bowl and recommended an equivalent pilgrimage site in Korea where "ten-thousand Mañjuśrīs constantly dwell."[6] The south Indian brahmin Bodhisena 菩提僊那 was drawn to make the voyage to Tang China by the lure of Mt. Wutai, but being informed upon arrival that Mañjuśrī had been reborn in Japan, departed for Japan in 736.[7] Discounting the miraculous elements of these tales, it is clear that Buddhist faith occasionally acted as a spur to wide-ranging travel.

Religious practice also demanded certain ritual commodities that could only be obtained from (or through) India.[8] Along the ancient central-Asian Silk Roads, "among the Indian export items Buddhist paraphernalia . . . probably dominated in terms of value."[9] In the South Seas the spread of Buddhism created a demand for "holy things" in the fifth and sixth centuries—incense, icons, and other religious materials—which exceeded the earlier secular traffic in elite luxury goods.[10] In China Buddhism stimulated private production and distribution of copies of the scriptures and sacred images, and encouraged the early development of print technology—a popular commercial market for printed religious texts and calendars having developed during the Tang dynasty unnoticed by officialdom, except in passing criticism.[11]

Although the following sequence of transactions concern official embassies—almost the only kind of international exchange that traditional East Asian historians deigned to record—rather than private trade, it nonetheless demonstrates how Buddhism could facilitate commodity exchanges linking Southeast Asia, through China, to Japan. In 503 King Kauṇḍinya Jayavarman 憍陳如闍耶跋摩 of Funan 扶南 (in what is now Cambodia and southern Vietnam) offered a coral Buddha in tribute to the Southern-dynasty Liang emperor of China.[12] In 539 Liang sent a monk to Funan to receive a hair of the Buddha; in 540 Funan requested Buddhist images and texts from Liang; in 541 Paekche (Korea) requested Buddhist texts from Liang.[13] In 542, then, Paekche sent offerings of Funan goods, and two slaves, to Japan.[14] The gift of Funan goods was followed three years later by a Paekche present of southern Chinese goods to the Japanese outpost in Korea, coinciding with a royal Paekche Buddhist invocation calling for the spiritual release of all things living under heaven.[15]

Buddhism prospered in China "because it offered the Chinese unlimited means of turning material wealth into spiritual felicity": even the rich—especially the rich—could earn salvation through generous sharing of their

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[1] Wang Jinlin 王金林, *Nara bunka to Tō bunka* (Nara Culture and Tang Culture) (Tokyo: Rokkō shuppan kabushiki kaisha, 1988), 300. On the Confucian-Legalist synthesis in early Japan, see Charles Holcombe, "*Ritsuryō* Confucianism," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 57.2 (1997).

[2] William Wayne Farris, *Population, Disease, and Land in Early Japan, 645–900* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1985), 142–44.

[3] Shi Jiaming 施加銘, "Riben gudai guojia de fazhan" (The Development of the Ancient Japanese State), *Zhongguo yu Riben* 141 (1972): 40; Hugo Munsterberg, *The Arts of Japan: An Illustrated History* (Rutland, Vt.: Charles E. Tuttle, 1957), 53.

[4] Himanshu P. Ray, *The Winds of Change: Buddhism and the Maritime Links of Early South Asia* (Delhi: Oxford Univ. Press, 1994), 8, 153–54.

[5] Tonami Mamoru 礪波護 and Takeda Yukio 武田幸男, *Zui-Tō teikoku to kodai Chōsen* (The Sui-Tang Empire and Ancient Korea), *Sekai no rekishi* 6 (Tokyo: Chuokoron-sha, 1997), 232.

[6] *Samguk yusa* 三國遺事 (Memorabilia from the Three [Korean] Kingdoms), by Iryŏn, *Da Zangjing* (photo-reprint of Taishō *Tripitaka*) (1280; Taibei: Zhonghua fojiao wenhuaguan, 1957), 3; T.49.998, 1005.

[7] *Genkō shakusho* 元亨釋書 (History of Buddhism [Compiled During] the Genkō Era), *Shintei zōho kokushi taikei*, 31 (ca. 1322; Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1930), 15.224.

[8] Liu Xinru, *Ancient India and Ancient China: Trade and Religious Exchanges AD 1–600* (Delhi: Oxford Univ. Press, 1988), 100–101, 176.

[9] Maximilian Klimburg, "The Setting: The Western Trans-Himalayan Crossroads," in *The Silk Route and the Diamond Path: Esoteric Buddhist Art on the Trans-Himalayan Trade Routes*, ed. Deborah E. Klimburg-Salter (Los Angeles: UCLA Art Council, 1982), 32.

[10] Wang Gungwu, "The Nanhai Trade: A Study of the Early History of Chinese Trade in the South China Sea," *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 31.2 (1958): 53–55, 113.

[11] Thomas Francis Carter, *The Invention of Printing in China and its Spread Westward*, revised by L. Carrington Goodrich (1925; New York: The Ronald Press, 1955), 26–28, 38–41, 59–62; Paul Pelliot, *Œuvres posthumes*, IV: *Les débuts de l'imprimerie en chine* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1953), 33–34, 37–41, 50; Hu Shi 胡適, "Lun chu-Tang sheng-Tang hai meiyou diaoban shu" (On the Continued Nonexistence of Block-Printed Books in Early and High Tang), *Zhongguo tushu shi ziliao ji*, ed. Liu Jiabi (Hong Kong: Longmen shudian, 1974), 432; *Cefu yuangui* 冊府元龜 (The Great Tortoise of Archives) (ca. 1012; Taibei: Zhonghua shuju, 1981), 160.1932.

[12] *Liang shu* 梁書 (Dynastic History of the Liang), by Yao Silian (557–637) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1973), 54.789–90.

[13] *Fozu tongji* 佛祖統記 (Complete Records of the Buddha and Patriarchs), by Zhipan, *Da Zangjing* (1269), 37; T.49.351.

[14] *Nihon shoki* 日本書紀 (Chronicles of Japan), *Shintei zōho kokushi taikei* (fukyūban) (720; Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1993), 19.59.

[15] *Nihon shoki*, 19.71.

wealth with the Sangha.[16] The popularity in fourth and fifth century China of the Vimalakirti figure, a comfortably wealthy layman who was nonetheless spiritually unassailable, undoubtedly reflects the aspirations of many in his audience.[17]

The Sangha was therefore liberally endowed by pious laymen, many of whom were no doubt landowners or officials, but at least some of whom were merchants. "South Sea traders all served with honor," for example, a certain central Indian monk (Guṇavṛddhi 求那毗地, d. 502) who arrived in the Southern-dynasty Chinese capital (modern Nanjing) *circa* 479, "and made offerings as they came and went" so that he became selflessly rich in the service of the Buddha.[18]

The financial resources of the Buddhist Sangha became so great that, in the fifth century, Wang Sengda 王僧達 (423–58) could use his official position to extort "several million" in cash from one monk.[19] In China the Sangha turned some of its vast resources to novel commercial purposes, lending out grain for a profit and experimenting with pawnbroking already in the fifth and sixth centuries.[20] D. D. Kosambi speculates that in India monasteries provisioned caravans and lent essential capital to merchants in the early centuries of the Buddhist era, although other scholars express skepticism that Indian Buddhists would have participated so directly in commercial activity.[21] It remains plausible, however, that the early Sangha did fill something of the role performed by the modern secular commercial infrastructure, facilitating financial services and long-distance communication.[22]

Contact between peoples belonging to different cultures can generate ethnic friction, and even open hostility.[23] Buddhism's universalistic ethos helped to smooth over such parochial suspicions.[24] In East Asia Buddhist monks themselves initially presented a truly outlandish spectacle, with their uncovered right shoulders, saffron robes, shorn heads, and bare feet.[25] Individual Chinese, like the hermit Gu Huan 顧歡 (420–83) and Emperor Wu of the Northern Zhou (r. 561–78), did object to these and other alien practices, but the Buddhist reply was that "in the extremity of the Dao there is no . . . near or far," and that all such differences are simultaneously both relative and irrelevant: at one level the Chinese empire itself had incorporated a number of what had once been foreign states and cultures, while at another level China and India were similarly just sub-regions in the vast realm of the great Buddhist Jambu Cakravartin king.[26] As the Chan (Zen) patriarch Huineng 慧能 (638–713) is alleged to have quipped: "For people there are north and south. For the Buddha-nature, how could there be?"[27]

In Japan, the quarrel over whether or not to accept Buddhism, as it is presented in the surviving written sources at least, was couched in terms of the same opposition between native parochial interests and internationalism, with the latter eventually winning, less for noble philosophical reasons than simple pragmatism: "All the states of the Western foreigners worship it—how could Japan alone turn its back?"[28] There is, of course, good reason for handling all such early Japanese accounts with caution. They are the purposeful literary creations of later generations, not pristine archival records. Still, the famous tale of Buddhist internationalism triumphing over nativist exclusion in Japan may reflect some faint echoes of the true story.[29]

The Buddhist spirit minimized regional differences. Prince Nagaya 長屋 of Japan (684–729) reportedly ordered a thousand monks' robes to be embroidered with the following passage: "The mountains and streams of different lands share the wind and the moon of the same heaven. It is up to all the children of Buddha to bind their destinies together."[30] When Saichō 最澄 (767–822) re-embarked for Japan in 805, following his brief initiation into Tiantai (Tendai) Buddhism in Tang China, the Chinese governor of Taizhou 台州 observed that, while "in appearance the priest Saichō is from a foreign land, his nature truly springs from the same origin."[31] Much as Christianity in Europe at about this same time fostered a sense of shared Latin civilization amid the cloisters of what were sometimes truly multi-ethnic monasteries, Buddhism in East Asia carried an international flavor.[32] When the Chinese monk Ganjin 鑒真 (687–763) set sail on his sixth and final attempt to introduce the proper Vinaya to Japan in 753, in addition to his Chinese party he brought with him in his entourage a Malay, a Cham, and another person vaguely described as Hu 胡 (northwestern foreigner).[33]

[16] Michel Strickmann, "India in the Chinese Looking Glass," in *The Silk Route and the Diamond Path*, 59.

[17] Richard Mather, "Vimalakirti and Gentry Buddhism," *History of Religions* 8.1 (1968): 63.

[18] *Chu Sanzang jiji* 出三藏記集 (Collected Records from the *Tripitaka*), by Seng You (435–518) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1995), 14.552.

[19] *Song shu* 宋書 (Dynastic History of the [Liu-]Song), By Shen Yue (441–513) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1974), 75.1954. On the economic history of the Church in China, see Jacques Gernet, *Buddhism in Chinese Society: An Economic History from the Fifth to the Tenth Centuries*, tr. Franciscus Verellen (1956; New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1995).

[20] *Wei shu* 魏書 (Dynastic History of the [Northern] Wei), by Wei Shou (506–72) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1974), 114.3041; Lien-sheng Yang, "Buddhist Monasteries and Four Money-Raising Institutions in Chinese History," in Yang, *Studies in Chinese Institutional History* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1961), 198–202; Qu Xiaoqiang 屈小強, *Bai ma dong 'ai: fojiao dongchuan jiemi* (The White Horse Comes East: Uncovering the Secret of Buddhism's Eastward Dissemination) (Chengdu: Sichuan renmin chubanshe, 1995), 92–93.

[21] D. D. Kosambi, *The Culture and Civilization of Ancient India in Historical Outline* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965), 182–87. Ray, 149, writes that Kosambi's interpretation "has not found general acceptance."

[22] Liu Xinru, 120–23, 175.

[23] See Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996), 67–68.

[24] Jerry H. Bentley, *Old World Encounters: Cross-Cultural Contacts and Exchanges in Pre-Modern Times* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1993), 83–84. On Buddhist universalism, see Tsukamoto Zenryū, *A History of Early Chinese Buddhism: From its Introduction to the Death of Hui-yüan*, tr. Leon Hurvitz (1979; Tokyo: Kodansha, 1985), 15.

[25] Michihata Ryōshū 道端良秀, *Chūgoku bukkyō shakai-keizai shi no kenkyū* (Studies in the Socio-Economic History of Chinese Buddhism) (Kyoto: Heirakuji shoten, 1983), 291–92, 306–8.

[26] *Nan shi* 南史 (History of the Southern Dynasties) by Li Yanshou (Ca. 629; Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975), 75.1875–77; *Hong ming ji* 弘明集 (Collection Expanding Illumination), by Seng You (435–518) (Taibei: Zhonghua shuju, 1983), 7.1b–2a, 5b–6a; *Guang hong ming ji* 廣弘明集 (Extended Collection Expanding Illumination), by Daoxuan (596–667) (Taibei: Zhonghua shuju, 1966), 10.2a/b; *Fozu tongji*, 38; T.49.358.

[27] *Fozu tongji*, 39; T.49.368.

[28] *Nihon shoki*, 19.76–78. For a discussion of this controversy, see Joseph M. Kitagawa, "The Shadow of the Sun: A Glimpse of the Fujiwara and the Imperial Families in Japan," in *On Understanding Japanese Religion* (1982; Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1987), 102–4.

[29] Ienaga Saburō 家永三郎, ed., *Nihon Bukkyōshi: Kodai hen* (History of Japanese Buddhism: Antiquity) (Tokyo: Hōzōkan, 1967), 52.

[30] "Tō dai oshō tōseiden" 唐大和上東征傳 (Record of the Great Tang Priest's Eastward Expedition), by Ōmi no Mifune (722–85), *Nara ibun* (Tokyo: Tōkyōdō shuppan, 1967), 896.

[31] "Dengyō daishi shōrai mokuroku" 傳教大師將來目錄 (Catalog of [Books] Brought by Saichō), *Dengyō daishi zenshū*, 4 (805; Tokyo: Sekai seiten kankō kyōkai, 1989), 368.

[32] See the description of "Insular art" in the seventh-century British Isles, in Bernard Wailes and Amy L. Zoll, "Civilization, Barbarism, and Nationalism in European Archaeology," in *Nationalism, politics, and the practice of archaeology*, ed. Philip L. Kohl and Clare Fawcett (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1995), 31–33.

[33] Yang Zengwen 楊曾文, *Riben fojiao shi* (A History of Japanese Buddhism) (Hangzhou: Zhejiang renmin chubanshe, 1995), 80. For Ganjin, see *Genkō shakusho*, 1.31–32.

THE ADVERSARIAL STATE, WANDERING MERCHANTS AND VAGABOND MONKS

It is known that by the Tang dynasty a significant volume of shipping was arriving in China from the South Seas. When Ganjin passed through the southern port of Guangzhou (Canton) on his circuitous route to Japan in the mid-eighth century, he found "unknown numbers of Indian, Persian, South Sea and other boats, laden with incense, drugs and precious things piled up like mountains," and he reported that "an extremely great variety" of foreigners "come and go and reside there."[34]

Chinese sources normally only record the arrival of official tribute-bearing embassies, and do not mention private vessels at all. In the absence of other data, the frequency of embassies is sometimes taken as an indication of the volume of maritime activity in general. Sometimes it is even assumed that the recorded tribute-embassies were the only foreign contacts that took place whatsoever. Prior to the fifth century there were few tribute missions, although their number swelled to a crescendo in the fifth and sixth centuries.[35] In fact, however, there is considerable reason to doubt the reliability of official embassies as any index for the volume of trade and a good likelihood that these statistics conceal a great deal of unrecorded private shipping.[36]

Official ideology in imperial China favored agriculture over trade, sometimes even advocating "restraining commerce with the law" to encourage farming instead.[37] "Craftsmen and merchant families eating off of jade [utensils] and clothed in brocade, [while] farmers eat coarse grains" was viewed as an unacceptable reversal of the proper social order, which put farming above all other non-governmental occupations.[38] Even when not actively hostile to trade, members of the elite were at least dismissive of it, and legal restrictions, such as the Tang ban of 667 on artisans and merchants riding horses, were not uncommon in an early imperial China famous for its

[34] "Tō dai oshō tōseiden," 902.

[35] *Tong dian* 通典 (Comprehensive Canons), by Du You (735–812) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1984), 188.1007; *Nan shi*, 78.1947; *Liang shu*, 54.783.

[36] See Liu Shufen 劉淑芬, "Liuchao nanhai maoyi de kaizhan" (The Development of South Sea Trade in the Six Dynasties), *Liuchao de chengshi yu shehui* (Taibei: Xuesheng shuju, 1992), 317. ≥

[37] Lu Ji 陸機 (261–303), in *Jin wen gui* 晉文軌 (Return to Jin Literature), ed. Zhong Xing (ca. 1600) (rpt.: Taibei: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1973), 4.13a.

[38] *Wei shu*, 60.1332–33.

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extreme physiocratic theories."[39] Just as commonly, rdinary people attempted to evade these regulations. In ie early Han dynasty, for example, it was reported that itizens in the Ba-Shu 巴蜀 region of modern Sichuan rovince slipped out past the borders to trade illegally ith Yunnan tribesmen for horses, servants, and cattle—ausing the region of Sichuan to become "wealthy."[40]

Private trade therefore often took place outside the w, or at least beyond official cognizance. But it thrived, equently, nonetheless. By the fourth century, the (extra-gal) economic exuberance of the Chinese Southern ynasties was making it "difficult to maintain the tradi-onal administration and order of urban market areas."[41] he very weakness of the state during the era of the outhern dynasties may have even contributed to their ndoubted commercial prosperity. In contrast to the usual hinese assumption of a close correlation between dy-astic splendor and general prosperity, a strong dynasty ke the early Tang might actually succeed in imposing ealistic, but economically counter-productive, restric-ons on trade, with the effect of stifling it somewhat. In ie opinion of the Japanese scholar Kawakatsu Yoshio 川勝義雄, Sui-Tang military reunification of imperial hina may have resulted in an overall setback to the pre-iously burgeoning southern commercial economy.[42]

Tang, as an especially vigorous and powerful imperial ynasty, may have been relatively successful in its at-empts to secure its borders and regulate trade.[43] An im-perial command of 714, for example, enumerated various commodities that could not be allowed to pass into the hands of the foreigners living along the northwest frontier, while another edict of 743 ordered the complete termination of trade across the western border, for strategic reasons, and despite its acknowledged profitability.[44] Early Tang efforts to limit foreign entry to official tribute-bearing embassies were concentrated, however, on this militarily vital northwestern land frontier (and diluted by sometimes rather conveniently elastic definitions of both "embassies" and Chinese "citizenship"); maritime contact along the eastern coast seems to have been less of a concern, and possibly was interfered with less.[45]

Tang legal restrictions, moreover, proved ultimately to be an ineffectual bar to foreign trade, and famously disintegrated towards the end of the dynasty.[46] Yet even in late Tang the state still attempted to maintain a regulatory approach to commerce, in 851, for example, mandating the appointment of officials to supervise the markets of all districts with three thousand or more households.[47] Although members of the socio-political elite themselves were not always above competing with commoners for commercial profit, the Tang government remained resolutely indifferent to commercial interests.[48] In 863, for example, officials created considerable distress among the trading community when they arbitrarily confiscated private merchant vessels, and jettisoned their cargoes, so that they could be used to provision troops by sea from Fujian to Guangzhou.[49]

Despite this official disregard, indirect evidence of flourishing sea-borne commerce, unrelated to any tribute embassies, is provided by the notoriously continuous, uninterrupted opportunity for official corruption presented by trade in the southern ports, from the Han dynasty through the Tang. Guangzhou (Canton) and Jiaozhi 交阯 (a Chinese administrative city in the vicinity of modern Hanoi) were long known as places where merchants could become rich.[50] Complaints of official extortion become endemic in the region as early as the late Han.[51] In the early fourth century, at a time when tribute embassies were few, it is nonetheless reported that Chinese officials in what is now northern Vietnam made outrageous demands upon the foreign merchants who came by sea, bringing gifts of valuable goods as bribes.[52] One contemporary wit explained that in Guangzhou there was a "spring of avarice," drinking from which caused officials to lose their incorruptibility.[53] Around the turn of the fifth century it was reported that the combination of economic opportunity and insalubrious climate insured that only corrupt and greedy officials were willing to risk appointment to far-off southern Guangzhou.[54]

Official exactions continued into the Tang. For the year 817 it was observed: "Foreign ships arriving at their moorings were taxed to drop anchor. When they first arrived, there was the entertaining of the inspectors of the cargo—horn and pearls in profusion, with bribes reaching even to their servants."[55] In the late ninth-century, when the rebel Huang Chao 黃巢 (d. 884) offered to surrender in exchange for appointment as Protector General of Annam (Vietnam) and Military Commissioner of Guangzhou, he was rejected on the grounds that "The profits from South Sea trade are immeasurable. If a rebel obtains them he will increasingly prosper, while the state's consumption will suffer."[56] All of this is indirect, but conclusive, evidence of a fairly substantial private maritime trade throughout this period, including intervals when tribute-missions were rare.

Further evidence of continuous private trading activity, even as official embassies slowed to a trickle during the interim between the great unified Han and Tang dynasties, is provided by the number of Buddhist monks who are known to have come to China by sea.[57] Kang Senghui 康僧會 ("the Kang—or Central Asian—Monk Hui"; d. 280) is a good example. His family was originally from Samarkand, but had lived for generations in India. Kang Senghui's parents moved to Chinese Jiaozhi "on business," where both parents soon died. The orphaned Kang Senghui then became a monk, after completing the prescribed mourning for his parents, and in 247 moved north to the capital of Three Kingdoms Wu (modern Nanjing), becoming allegedly the first *śramaṇa* to appear there. He was reported to the throne by an officer as "a Hu," or Central Asian, "calling himself a *śramaṇa*, whose appearance and dress are not normal," and he subsequently made a favorable impression on the ruler of Wu with his Buddhist miracles.[58]

The Kashmiri monk Guṇavarman 求那跋摩 (367–431) is another example. After being warmly welcomed in Java, he was "delighted" to receive an official invitation from the emperor of Southern-dynasty Song China, and, traveling by ship through the port of Guangzhou, arrived at the Song capital in 431.[59] A brahmin from central India named Guṇabhadra 求那跋陀羅 reportedly "drifted with the shipping across the sea" to Guangzhou in 435.[60] Going the other way, the Chinese monk Yijing 義淨 (635–713) embarked upon a voyage to India aboard a merchantman departing from Guangzhou in 671.[61] Vajrabodhi 金剛智 (in China 719) and Amoghavajra 不空 (705–74) must be counted among the most influential western monks in Tang China; both "followed the South Sea" to Guangzhou.[62]

Three subjects that mainstream traditional Chinese historians seldom addressed were trade, Buddhism, and foreigners. In the sixth century the Buddhist author Huijiao

[39] *Xin Tang shu* 新唐書 (New Dynastic History of the Tang), by Ouyang Xiu (1007–72) and Song Qi (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 975), 3.66; Denis Twitchett, "The T'ang Market System," *Asia Major*, n.s., 12.2 (1966): 205–7, 213–14. For conditions at the start of the imperial period, see He Qinggu 何清谷, "Qin Shihuang hidai de siying gongshangye" (Private Handicrafts and Trade in he Age of the First Emperor of Qin), *Wenbo* 38 (1990.5).

[40] Han shu 漢書 (Dynastic History of the [Former] Han), by Ban Gu (32–92) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1962), 95.3838.

[41] Liu Shufen, "San zhi liu shiji Zhe-dong diqu de jingji zhanhan" (The Economic Development of the Eastern Zhejiang Region in the third–sixth Centuries), *Liuchao de chengshi yu shehui* (1987; Taibei: Xuesheng shuju, 1992), 205.

[42] Kawakatsu Yoshio, *Chūgoku no rekishi*, 3: *Gi-Shin nan-hokuchō* (Chinese History, 3: The Wei, Jin, Northern and Southern Dynasties) (Tokyo: Kōdan-sha, 1981), 267–68; "Kahei keizai no shinten to Kō Kei no ran" (The Development of a Money Economy and Hou Jing's Rebellion), *Rikuchō kizokusei shakai no kenkyū* (1962; Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1982), 369.

[43] For the rigorous Tang border and pass control restrictions, see *Tang lü shuyi* 唐律疏議 (An Annotated Discussion of the Tang Penal Code), by Zhangsun Wuji (653; Taibei: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1990), 8.124–28.

[44] *Tang huiyao* 唐會要 (Institutes of Tang), by Wang Pu (922–82) (Taibei: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1968), 86.1581; 86.1579.

[45] See Arakawa Masaharu 荒川正晴, "Tō teikoku to Sogudo jin no kōeki katsudō" (The Tang Empire and Sogdian Commercial Activity), *Tōyōshi-kenkyū* 56.3 (1997): 171. See also *Tang lü shuyi*, 8.128.

[46] For the ineffectiveness of Tang currency export regulations, see, for example, Xie Haiping 謝海平, *Tang dai liu Hua waiguoren shenghuo kaoshu* (A Study of the Lives of Foreigners who Lived in China during the Tang Dynasty) (Taibei: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1978), 353–54.

[47] *Tang huiyao*, 86.1583.

[48] *Tang huiyao*, 86.1582.

[49] *Dai viet su ky toan thu* 大越史記全書 (Complete Historical Records of Great Vietnam), by Ngo Si Lien (1479; Tokyo: Tōkyō daigaku tōyō bunka kenkyūsho fuzoku, 1986), ngoai ky 5.165.

[50] *Han shu*, 28B.1670; *Sui-shu* 隋書 (Dynastic History of the Sui), by Wei Zheng (580–643) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1973), 31.887–88.

[51] *Annam chi luoc* 安南志略 (A Brief Chronicle of Vietnam), by Le Tac (1340; Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1995), 7.167.

[52] *Jin shu* 晉書 (Dynastic History of the Jin), ed. Fang Xuanling (644; Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1974), 97.2546; *Tong dian*, 188.1008.

[53] *Jin zhongxing shu* 晉中興書 (fifth century), quoted in *Chu xue ji* 初學記 (Record of Initial Learning), ed. Xu Jian (659–729) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1962), 8.192.

[54] *Jin shu*, 90.2341.

[55] *Han Changli quanji* 韓昌黎全集 (Collected Works of Han Yu [768–824]) (Beijing: Zhongguo shudian, 1991), 33.416. See also *Xin Tang shu*, 163.5009.

[56] *Xin Tang shu*, 225C.6454.

[57] See Wu Tingqiu 吳廷璆 and Zheng Pengnian 鄭彭年, "Fojiao hai shang chuanru Zhongguo zhi yanjiu" (Studies in the Transmission of Buddhism to China by Sea), *Lishi yanjiu* 2 (1995): 25–26, 39; Feng Chengjun 馮承鈞, *Zhongguo Nanyang jiaotong shi* (A History of Chinese Communication with the South Seas) (1937; Taibei: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1993), 31–35.

[58] *Chu sanzang jiji*, 13.512–13; *Gao seng zhuan* 高僧傳 (Biographies of Eminent Monks), by Huijiao (ca. 530; Taibei: Huiwentang, 1987), 1.10–12; *Fozu tongji*, 35; T.49.331. See Gao Guanru 高觀如, "Zhong wai fojiao guanxi shilüe" (Brief History of Sino-Foreign Buddhist Relations), *Zhongguo fojiao*, 1 (Shanghai: Dongfang chuban zhongxin, 1980), 210.

[59] *Chu sanzang jiji*, 14.543; *Fozu tongji*, 36; T.49.344.

[60] *Chu sanzang jiji*, 14.547–48.

[61] Sun Changwu 孫昌武, *Zhongguo fojiao wenhua xushuo* (Introduction to Chinese Buddhist Culture) (Tianjin: Nankai daxue chubanshe, 1990), 80.

[62] *Fozu tongji*, 40; T.49.373.

慧皎, for example, complained that despite the attainments of the Kushan lay Buddhist Zhi Qian 支謙 (flourished 222–ca. 253) at the court of Three Kingdoms Wu, and his contributions to the eastward dissemination of Buddhism, he was not reported in the chronicles of Wu because he was a foreigner—and this in spite of the fact that Zhi Qian's family had actually immigrated to China two generations earlier, in his grandfather's time, and he had studied Chinese before he learned to write any of the western languages.[63] Since we are concerned here with all three of these oft-neglected subjects, it is fortunate that there exists a large independent, unofficial, Buddhist literature, from which we may indirectly learn something about trade and immigration as well.

Political division in China, and the succession of Southern dynasties that were established beginning with Three Kingdoms Wu and Eastern Jin in the third and fourth centuries, promoted the development of maritime trade through the South Seas simply because these politically struggling but commercially prosperous Chinese states were cut off from the traditional Central Asian caravan routes to their north.[64] In the third century, already, Zhang Hua 張華 (232–300) could write that "today those who cross the South Seas to arrive at Jiaozhi are without interruption."[65] On the Malay peninsula a principality called (in Chinese) Dunxun 頓遜 communicated with China to the east, and India and Persia to the west. "In its markets over ten thousand persons from east and west converged each day. There was no treasure or precious commodity they did not have."[66] Merchants from India and even more distant lands "frequently" traded with Funan (in modern Cambodia and southern Vietnam) and the Chinese administered regions of modern northern Vietnam during the period of the Chinese Southern dynasties.[67]

[63] *Gao seng zhuan*, 1.10–11; *Chu sanzang jiji*, 13.516.

[64] *Song shu*, 97.2399. See Haneda Akira 羽田明, "Tô-zai kôtsû" (East-West Communication), *Kizoku shakai*, ed. Sotoyama Gunji et al. (Osaka: Sôgensha, 1981), 116; Liu Shufen, "Nanhai," 341.

[65] *Bowu zhi* 博物志 (An Extensive Account of Many Things), by Zhang Hua (232–300) (Taibei: Zhonghua shuju, 1983), 1.2a.

[66] *Liang shu*, 54.787; *Cefu yuangui*, 959.11289. For the location of Dunxun, see Willem Pieter Groeneveldt, *Notes on the Malay Archipelago and Malacca, Compiled from Chinese Sources* (Batavia: 1876), 119–21; Kenneth R. Hall, *Maritime Trade and State Development in Early Southeast Asia* (Honolulu: Univ. of Hawaii Press, 1985), 64–67.

[67] *Liang shu*, 54.798. In the Tang dynasty it was reported that Funan "adjoined" eastern India, and was "only separated from it by a small sea." *Tang huiyao*, 100.1786.

THE "INDIANIZATION" OF SOUTHEAST ASIA

This booming South Sea trade was encouraged by the formation of a "Sanskrit cosmopolis," a vast Indic oikoumene extending throughout nearly all of South and Southeast Asia during the first millennium of the Christian era, and marked by the use of Sanskrit as the universal language of celebratory public inscriptions.[68] Although often described as a process of "Indianization," no direct Indian political domination, conquest, or colonization of the region was contemplated, nor was there even a single preexisting "Indian" culture to expand across the region: "In fact, much of India itself was being Indianized at the very same period as Java or Khmer country—and in a hardly different way. . . ."[69]

Any suggestion of sweeping physical Indian colonization of the South Sea trading zone is decisively contradicted by the persistence there of quite unrelated Austronesian languages, among which Indian loanwords were restricted to Sanskrit terminology having narrowly elite religio-political applications. That the direction of population movement to some extent passed both ways is, moreover, evident from the apparent settlement of Madagascar sometime after 400 A.D. by Austronesian-speaking people coming from what is now southern Borneo. Yet a thin, perhaps, dispersion of actual persons from the Indian subcontinent must have been essential to the rise of "Indianized" communities in Southeast Asia, enabling the formation of an overarching Sanskrit cosmopolis which embraced such diverse native lands.[70]

China, too, was constructing its own "universal" Sinic world-order in East Asia at about this same time; one forged, in this case, chiefly by direct imperial conquest. But Chinese merchants rarely ventured beyond Chinese ports, and China played a largely passive role in the South Sea trade of this era: Southeast Asians and Indians seem to have handled most of the shipping prior to the rise of Arab trade in the mid-eighth century.[71] In Funan, "Southeast Asia's first state" (ca. first–sixth centuries), an Indian brahmin named Kaundinya 憍陳如 became king in the late fourth century, and reportedly altered its institutions to conform to Indian usage.[72] Other Indians are supposed to have ruled in Funan even before that time, and Indian and even Roman artifacts and inscriptions have been uncovered there by archeologists dating from as early as the second century.[73] Following the demise of Funan in the early seventh century, the heavily Indianized Buddhist trading community of Śrivijaya 尸利佛逝國, on the island of Sumatra, rose to dominate Southeast Asian trade for several centuries, beginning about 670.[74]

On the Chinese border, in what is now central Vietnam, Austronesian-speaking peoples established a heavily Indianized kingdom called Champa 林邑 towards the end of the second century.[75] The early Cham kings reportedly dressed after the fashion of Buddhist images, and went out in procession astride elephants in the Indian manner, shaded by parasols, to the sound of the blowing of conches and the beating of drums.[76] In 331 (or 337) the Cham throne was usurped by a certain King Wen 文王, who some accounts claim was born farther north in China proper, but who as a youth had become a household slave of a tribal leader in Chinese-administered Vietnam, and traveled widely in the capacity of a merchant. In Champa he impressed the native king with his extensive knowledge of the world, and eventually engineered his own usurpation, after which time Champa became an increasingly serious military threat to the southern Chinese administrations.[77]

Coedès believed that the Indianized communities of Southeast Asia became progressively more Hinduized as well, but that commerce and Buddhist missionary zeal were the initial impulses driving this expansion of Indic culture.[78] During the early centuries of the Christian era wandering Indian Buddhists must have been a surprisingly frequent sight in Southeast and even East Asian waters. In the context of a Buddhist account, five large Indian merchant vessels were reported in the middle reaches of the Yangzi River, above Lake Dongting, in the early fifth century.[79] In 499 a foreign monk is recorded to have arrived in central China, claiming to have come from Fusô 扶桑 (Ch., Fusang), an obscurely legendary land located beyond Japanese Wa. The monk explained that in 458 five bhikṣus from Kashmir had introduced Buddhism to that island.[80] Although Fusô cannot now be located, and his story is unverifiable, there is no reason to doubt his reported arrival in China, or the scattering of other monks out across the South Seas. It may be questioned how many of these were from the actual Indian subcontinent, but their Indic orientation is beyond suspicion.

By the fifth century the fringe of this Indian diaspora may have reached modern Korea.[81] Of greater relevance, a few Indians seem to have even put ashore in Japan. The *Nihon shoki* records that in 654 four persons from Tokhara (Afghanistan) and a woman from Śrāvasti (northeast India) were blown by a storm to Hyuga, in southeast Kyûshû.[82] Writing in the nineteenth century, Aston dismissed this ancient Japanese record with the observation that "it is absurd to speak of natives of India being cast ashore" in Japan.[83] In the light of the archeological and other evidence for a universalized Indic community extending

[68] Sheldon Pollock, "The Cosmopolitan Vernacular," *Journal of Asian Studies* 57.1 (1998): 6, 10–12. See also George Coedès, *The Indianized States of Southeast Asia*, tr. Susan Brown Cowing (1944; Honolulu: East-West Center Press, 1968), xvii, 10, 15; Li Donghua 李東華, "Han-Sui jian Zhongguo nanhai jiaotong zhi yanbian" (The Evolution of Chinese Communication with the South Seas from Han to Sui), (Zhongguo lishixue hui) *Shixue jikan* 11 (1979): 50.

[69] Pollock, 33. For a discussion of "Indianization," see Lynda Norene Shaffer, *Maritime Southeast Asia to 1500* (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1996), 24–26; Ray, 88–90. Kosambi, 166–76, provides an Indian perspective on this process.

[70] Peter Bellwood, *Prehistory of the Indo-Malaysian Archipelago* (1985; Honolulu: Univ. of Hawaii Press, 1997), 137–38. For Madagascar, see 122–23, 136, 276.

[71] Wang Gungwu, 43–44, 103; Hall, 42.

[72] Hall, 48–77; *Liang shu*, 54.789; *Tong dian*, 188.1008; Coedès, 56. Ray, 159–60, suggests that unlike a modern "state" or "kingdom," this Funan was more of a simple congeries of "chiefdoms."

[73] Hall, 59; Coedès, 17.

[74] Coedès, 81; Wang Gungwu, 97; Hall, 78.

[75] Lü Shipeng 呂士朋, *Bei shu shiqi de Yuenan: Zhong-Yue guanxi shi zhi yi* (Vietnam in the Period of Subordination to the North: A History of Sino-Vietnamese Relations) (Hong Kong: Chinese Univ. of Hong Kong, Southeast Asia Studies Section, 1964), 86–87. On the island origins of the Chams, see Charles Higham, *The Bronze Age of Southeast Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1996), 304–8. The kingdom of Champa is said to have survived, in one form or another, until the early nineteenth century.

[76] *Cefu yuangui*, 959.11288; *Taiping yulan* 太平御覽 ([Encyclopedia Assembled for] Imperial Inspection during the Taiping Era) (983; Taibei: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1980), 786.3611.

[77] *Shui jing zhu* 水經注 (Annotated Classic of Rivers), by Li Daoyuan (ca. 520; Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1990), 36.685; *Jin shu*, 97.2545–46; *Liang shu*, 54.784; *Tong dian*, 188.1008.

[78] Coedès, 19–21, 23, 50–51, 63–64. See also Ray, 132–34, 136, 199–200; Bellwood, 137–38.

[79] *Gao seng zhuan*, 2.50. See Feng Chengjun, 35.

[80] *Liang shu*, 54.808.

[81] Kamata Shigeo 鎌田茂雄, *Bukkyô denrai* (The Introduction of Buddhism) (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1995), 11.

[82] *Nihon shoki*, 25.256.

[83] W. G. Aston, tr., *Nihongi: Chronicles of Japan from the Earliest Times to A.D. 697* (1896; Rutland, Vt.: Charles E. Tuttle, 1972), 2:246 n. 8.

throughout Southeast Asia in this period, however, it is not at all unbelievable that isolated Indians or other Indianized persons might have voyaged as far as the coasts of Japan, although the recorded Indian place-names may well be garbled ("exaggerated," or embellished, perhaps), and their numbers must have been few. There is also, moreover, the well documented case of the south Indian brahmin Bodhisena, who famously officiated at the ceremony "opening" the eyes of the Great Buddha at Nara in 752, and who arrived in Japan in 736 in the company of a Cham monk he had met "at sea."[84]

EARLY JAPAN'S SOUTHWARD TILT

Buddhism, of course, came to China overland, via the caravan trade routes of Central Asia, as well as by sea. If anything, this continental land transmission of Buddhism is better known, and was more influential. By 509, for example, there were a reported three thousand monks from the western regions in the Northern Wei empire.[85] The construction of over a hundred and twenty Buddhist stone grottoes in China beginning in the fourth and fifth centuries is enduring proof of this silk-route connection. Interestingly, however, this northern silk-route-style of Buddhist architecture extended no further east than Silla, in Korea, and no further south than approximately the line of the Yangzi River in China.[86] Such grottoes are notably lacking in Japan and Southern-dynasty China.

Although Buddhism was introduced to northern Korea from the northern (semi-) Chinese conquest states, presumably by land, it was introduced into the southwestern Korean kingdom of Paekche by a Hu monk Mālānanda 摩羅難陀, coming from Southern-dynasty Jin in 384, presumably by sea.[87] Thereafter, Paekche, which was renowned among the Korean kingdoms of the period for its sophisticated Buddhist culture, maintained notably close ties with the Chinese southern dynasties, especially from the late fifth century.[88] And it was Paekche, in particular, which was responsible for the transmission of Buddhism and other aspects of continental culture to Japan.[89] A number of scholars claim to detect a direct connection between the Buddhist culture of Southern dynasty China, Paekche, and Japan.[90] And when the Japanese subsequently began communicating directly by sea with China in the seventh century, bypassing Korean middlemen, their immediate point of disembarkation was also in south China, especially at the port city now called Ningbo.[91] All of this suggests a special relevance for the southern maritime diffusion of Buddhism to Japan. And, of course, the final jump across the straits of Tsushima or the East China Sea had, perforce, to be made by boat.

AN IMMIGRANT SOCIETY

Most of those who sailed to Japan in these early centuries, however, came as permanent immigrants—sometimes unintentionally, like the ten Paekche monks who were blown off their course home from south China in 609 and petitioned to be allowed to remain in Japan[92]—rather than transient traders.[93] The numbers of such immigrants were clearly substantial. For the year 540 alone the *Nihon shoki* records the registration of 7,053 households of "Hata" 秦 people.[94] This surname, Hata, makes allusion to the name of the first imperial dynasty of China (Ch., Qin),[95] but in practice in early Japan it held little more specific significance than "immigrant." Even in later centuries the Japanese did not always distinguish clearly between Chinese and Koreans, and such modern ethno-national labels should be applied only with caution, if at all, to this early period.[96] These numbers certainly suggest, however, that unrecorded, unofficial, crossings between the continent and Japan must have greatly outnumbered the handful of known official embassies.

It seems quite likely that some of these immigrants quietly slipped Buddhism into Japan as well, some years before the official public transmission.[97] There is a well-known story about a man from Southern-dynasty Liang named Shiba Tatto 司馬達等, who supposedly built a thatched hall to worship Buddha in Yamato in 522.[98] Shiba is a controversial figure, however.[99] His name is clearly a misreading of the Chinese-style name "Sima Da *and others*" (Ch., *deng* 等; J: *-to* or *-ra*); and, if such a person ever really existed, he is as likely to have arrived in Japan in 582 as in 522.[100] Even if we discount the Shiba Tatto story entirely, however, it remains interesting that the region of southern Yamato where he supposedly built his thatched hall was in fact a major center of immigrant activity, and an immigrant clan of saddle-makers claiming descent from Shiba Tatto did shortly thereafter play a prominent role in the promotion of Buddhism in Japan.[101]

Immigrants were essential to the early vitality of the Buddhist religion in Japan. In 584, when Soga no Umako 蘇我馬子 (d. 626) obtained a stone Buddhist image from Paekche, only a solitary lapsed priest from Koguryŏ (Korea) could reportedly be found in Japan to supervise its worship.[102] In 623 a priest from Paekche was made the first official head of the Japanese Buddhist church, and immigrants in general were quite prominent in early seventh-century Japanese Buddhism.[103]

Part of the conflict over whether or not to endorse Buddhism officially in sixth-century Japan in fact revolved around a struggle between the Soga, Mononobe 物部, and other leading clans for control over immigrant groups, who were associated not only with Buddhism, but other more tangibly valuable skills as well.[104] Soga family support for Buddhism was predicated upon a special Soga patronage relationship with immigrant communities, whose expertise in turn helped make possible the rise of the Soga to great power.[105] Among the skills imported by these immigrant groups must have been some familiarity with the already substantially commercialized economy of the continent.

Immigrants were made administrators of state finance in sixth-century Japan, possibly because of their reputation for success in accumulating private wealth.[106] The *Nihon shoki* records that, as a result of a dream, emperor

[84] *Genkō shakusho*, 15.224; "Nan tenjiku baramon sōjō hi" 南天竺婆羅門僧正碑 (Inscription for the Brahmin High Priest from Southern India), *Nara ibun* (Tokyo: Tōkyōdō shuppan, 1967), 887; Kamata Shigeo, 166, 277.

[85] *Fozu tongji*, 38; T.49.355.

[86] Sun Changwu, 199–201; Liu Xinru, 124, 144; Kamata Shigeo, 255; Luo Zongzhen 羅宗真, *Liu chao kaogu* (Six Dynasties Archeology) (Nanjing: Nanjing daxue chubanshe, 1994), 101, 241.

[87] *Samguk sagi* 三國史記 (Historical Record of the Three [Korean] Kingdoms), by Kim Pu-sik, annotated tr. by Ch'oe Ho (1145; Seoul: Hongsin munhwasa, 1994), 2:37 (Paekche basic annals 2); *Samguk yusa*, 3; T.49.986; Kamata Shigeo, 277.

[88] Han Sheng 韓昇, "'Wei fa Baiji' yu Nanbeichao shiqi Dongya guoji guanxi" ([Northern] Wei's Chastisement of Paekche, and East Asian International Relations in the Northern and Southern Dynasties Period), *Lishi yanjiu* (1995.3): 40–41, 43; Kamata Shigeo, 110. On Paekche culture, see Sarah Milledge Nelson, *The Archeology of Korea* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1993), 11, 220.

[89] See, for example, Saitō Tadashi 齋藤忠, *Chōsen kodai bunka no kenkyū* (Studies in Ancient Korean Culture) (Tokyo: Chijin shokan, 1943), 245; Kim Ch'ungnyŏ 金忠烈, *Gaoli ruxue sixiang shi* (A History of Koryŏ Confucian Thought) (Taibei: Dongda tushu gufen youxian gongsi, 1992), 35–38, 43.

[90] Yoshimura Rei 吉村怜, "Asuka yōshiki Nanchō kigen ron" (On the Southern Dynasty Origins of the Asuka-style), *Higashi Ajia to Nihon: kōko, bijutsu hen*, ed. Tamura Enchō sensei kokikinenkai (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1987); Sonoda Kōyū, "Early Buddha Worship," *The Cambridge History of Japan*, vol. 1: *Ancient Japan* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1993), 366, 370.

[91] Ōba Osamu 大庭脩, "Nihon no kenkyūsha kara mita Nitchū bunka kōryūshi" (The History of Sino-Japanese Cultural Exchange as Viewed by Japanese Scholars), *Nitchū bunka kōryūshi sōsho*, 1: *Rekishi*, ed. Ōba Osamu and Wang Xiaoqiu (Tokyo: Taishūkan shoten, 1995), 8–9. See also Lin Shimin 林士民, "Tang dai dongfang haishi juodong yu Mingzhou gang" (Eastern Maritime Activity in the Tang Dynasty and Mingzhou [Ningbo] Harbor), *Zhedong wenhua luncong*, ed. Dong Yi'an (Beijing: Zhongyang bianyi chubanshe, 1995), 153, 160.

[92] *Nihon shoki*, 22.151–52; *Genkō shakusho*, 16.231.

[93] William Wayne Farris, "Ancient Japan's Korean Connection," *Korean Studies* 20 (1996): 15–16.

[94] *Nihon shoki*, 19.51. For an example of large-scale naturalization of Koreans in the eighth century, see *Shoku Nihongi* 続日本紀, vol. 3 (Continued Chronicles of Japan), by Sugano no Mamichi and Fujiwara no Tsugutada, *Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei*, 12 (797; Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1992), 20.184–85, and note 14.

[95] More precisely, the written graph refers to Qin; the spoken pronunciation "Hata" is probably of Korean derivation. See William Wayne Farris, *Sacred Texts and Buried Treasures: Issues in the Historical Archaeology of Ancient Japan* (Honolulu: Univ. of Hawaii Press, 1998), 100.

[96] Huang Yuese 黃約瑟, "'Da-Tang shang ren' Li Yanxiao yu jiu shiji Zhong-Ri guanxi" (The 'Great Tang Merchant' Li Yanxiao and Sino-Japanese Relations in the Ninth-Century), *Lishi yanjiu* (1993.4): 51.

[97] Hayami Tasuku 速水侑, *Nihon bukkyōshi: kodai* (History of Japanese Buddhism: Antiquity) (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1986), 24–25.

[98] *Genkō shakusho*, 17.244–45; Gao Guanru, 185; Xia Yingyuan 夏應元, "Shin-Kan kara Zui-Tō jidai no Chū-Nichi bunka kōryū" (Sino-Japanese Cultural Exchange from the Qin-Han to the Sui-Tang Periods), *Nitchū bunka kōryūshi sōsho*, 1: *rekishi*, 102–3; J. H. Kamstra, *Encounter or Syncretism: The Initial Growth of Japanese Buddhism* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1967), 245–59.

[99] Bruno Lewin, *Aya und Hata: Bevölkerungsgruppen altjapans kontinentaler Herkunft* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1962), 148, and note 16.

[100] Yang Zengwen, p. 22; Naobayashi Futai 直林不退, "Torai kei shizoku bukkyō no hitotsu kōsatsu" (An Inquiry into the Buddhism of Immigrant Families), *Indogaku bukkyōgaku kenkyū* 43.1 (1994): 47; G. Renondéau, "La Date de l'introduction du bouddhisme au Japon," *T'oung Pao* 47 (1959): 19.

[101] Ueda Masaaki 上田正昭, *Kikujin: kodai kokka no seiritsu o megutte* (Naturalized Persons: Concerning the Formation of the Ancient State) (Tokyo: Chūō kōronsha, 1965), 120–21; Ienaga Saburō, 57.

[102] *Genkō shakusho*, 16.230–31, 17.244; *Nihon shoki*, 20.112–13. This story also involves Shiba Tatto.

[103] *Nihon shoki*, 22.164–65; Xia Yingyuan, 117; Kamstra, 299–300.

[104] Ueda Masaaki, 126.

[105] Ueda Masaaki, 120; Ienaga Saburō, 60, 62.

[106] Ueda Masaaki, 137–39.

Kimmei (r. 539–71), while still a youth, adopted as a favorite an immigrant named (in Japanese) Hata no Ôtsuchi 秦大津父, who is quoted as saying he had previously "traveled to Ise on business." Hata became very wealthy under the future emperor's patronage, and when Kimmei assumed the throne, he appointed Hata to the treasury.[107]

For 553 there is a brief but tantalizing reference to a man, of evidently Korean extraction, who was sent under imperial command by Soga no Iname 蘇我稲目 (d. 570) "to count and record the shipping taxes."[108] As usual, our information is most complete for official embassies, but there is reason to suppose that private vessels passing between Japan and the continent must have frequently outnumbered the official ones. Huang Yuese 黄約瑟, for example, counts two Tang embassies to Japan and fifteen Japanese embassies to Tang, but over thirty known private commercial ventures to Japan in late Tang alone.[109]

Nor is it correct to suppose that unofficial voyages to Japan only began in the late Tang dynasty. Clearly, they began in (Japanese) prehistory. A third-century Chinese account observed that residents of the islands in the straits between Korea and Japan "ride boats north and south to trade for grain."[110] Contact between the continent and the northern Japanese seaboard, across the Sea of Japan, was achieved by private fishing communities long before the rise of centralized political authority under the Yamato state.[111] Toward the end of the fifth century immigrant groups still reportedly lived scattered throughout Japan, under no central supervision.[112] The *Nihon shoki* mentions a boatload of people from Manchuria who spent the spring and summer of 544 fishing on an island off the northwest coast of Japan, eating their fill and frightening the local inhabitants.[113] Less obtrusive landfalls must have often gone unrecorded, or even unobserved.

The Yamato court certainly did eventually embrace the Chinese imperial ideal of confining international exchange exclusively to official tribute missions. The emerging centralized state in Japan, from the late fifth through the early seventh centuries, in fact owed much of its supremacy to its success in mobilizing groups of skilled immigrants, and supervising the distribution of foreign prestige goods.[114] This attempted monopolization of foreign intercourse by the centralizing core elite may have begun, as Hirano Kunio 平野邦雄 suggests, as early as the fourth century,[115] but it is unlikely that the incipient Japanese state was capable of patrolling the entire coastline with vigilance very much before the late 600s, and its effectiveness may be exaggerated by orthodox accounts even then. Hermetically sealed borders were, at best, a phenomenon of the late seventh and early eighth centuries, after which both the random immigration and petty trading of pre-"unification" Japan, and Nara period state-regulation, gave way to a new, more purposeful, form of private trade.

An official Japanese report, dated 842, observed that since the time of Emperor Shômu (r. 724–49), Sillans had been slipping privately into Japan as traders, without following the established procedure for tribute missions.[116] Lee Sungsi 李成市 takes the mid-eighth century as a turning point.[117] An indicator of the evolving orientation away from enforced official tribute embassies towards more private commercial exchange may be found in the court's award to top officials in 768 of a half-million bolts of cloth for the purpose of individually purchasing Sillan trade goods.[118] Below the level of elite luxury items, we may presume an emerging local trade in humbler commodities that passed beneath official notice, but which was perhaps cumulatively even more significant.

By late-Tang times Sillans (from a now unified Korea) appear to have dominated shipping in northeast Asian waters, and enjoyed well-established business communities in China.[119] Regional trade must have been largely

[107] *Nihon shoki*, 19.49–50.

[108] *Nihon shoki*, 19.79.

[109] Huang Yuese, 47.

[110] *San guo zhi* 三国志 (Chronicles of the [Chinese] Three Kingdoms), by Chen Shou (233–97), (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1959), 30.854.

[111] See Ueda Masaaki, *Ronkyû: kodaishi to higashi Ajia* (Discussion: Ancient History and East Asia) (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1998), 101–3.

[112] *Nihon shoki*, 14.385. Entry for 471 A.D.

[113] *Nihon shoki*, 19.70.

[114] Enomoto Junichi 榎本淳一, "'Kokufû bunka' to Chûgoku bunka: bunka inyû ni okeru chôkô to bôeki" ("National Culture" and Chinese Culture: Tribute and Trade in the Importation of Culture), *Kodai o kangaeru: Tô to Nihon*, ed. Ikeda On (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kôbunkan, 1992), 170, 172–73; Joan R. Piggot, *The Emergence of Japanese Kingship* (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 1997), 56–57, 71, 100.

[115] Hirano Kunio, *Kikajin to kodai kokka* (Naturalized Persons and the Ancient State) (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kôbunkan, 1993), 160–61.

[116] *Ruijû sandai kyaku* 類聚三代格 (Topically Arranged Regulations from Three Reigns), *Shintei zôho kokushi taikei* (Fukyûban) (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kôbunkan, 1993), 18.570.

[117] Lee Sungsi, *Higashi Ajia no ôken to kôeki: Shôsôin no hômotsu ga kita mô hitotsu no michi* (East Asian Sovereign Power and Trade: Another Route for the Arrival of the Treasures in the Shôsôin) (Tokyo: Aoki shoten, 1997), 160–66, 174–84.

[118] *Shoku Nihongi*, 4:29.220–21.

[119] Edwin O. Reischauer, tr., *Ennin's Diary: The Record of a Pilgrimage to China in Search of the Law* (New York: Ronald Press, 1955), 286–87; Chen Shangsheng 陳尚勝, "Tang dai de Xinluo qiaomin shequ" (Communities of Korean Resident Aliens in the Tang Dynasty), *Lishi yanjiu* (1996.1): 161–62.

[120] *Nihon shoki*, 24.190.

[121] Paul Wheatley and Thomas See, *From Court to Capital: A Tentative Interpretation of the Origins of the Japanese Urban Tradition* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1978), 154.

[122] *Shoku Nihongi*, 1:5.172–73; 6.194–95.

[123] *Nihon shoki*, 28.311.

[124] Kosambi, 124–25.

contained within East Asian hands, and there is little evidence of direct traffic between Japan and the South Seas. In 642, however, there is one fascinating passing reference in the Japanese annals to a report from some attendants of the Paekche delegation that their ambassadors had thrown "Kunlun" 崑崙 diplomats into the ocean, presumably during their mutual approach to Japan.[120] Kunlun was a generic Chinese term for Southeast Asians in this period, and since, as we suspect, private unreported commercial traffic tends to exceed public official transactions in volume, the account does suggest some marginal level of direct maritime contact between Japan and the South Seas in the seventh century. Most South and Southeast Asian exchange with Japan, however, must have come indirectly through China and Korea.

THE BUDDHIST COMMUNITY OF EARLY JAPAN

Unlike the continent, in newly imperial Japan the economy remained essentially at the barter level. Coins were not introduced until 708, and not very successfully even then.[121] The Japanese court had repeatedly thereafter to issue edicts urging the people to make use of this new medium of exchange, and threaten the confiscation of fields that were priced for trade in objects other than money.[122] In 672, at the start of the civil war that would bring Emperor Temmu (r. 673–90) to the throne, an urgent démarche forced the future emperor to set out from Yoshino without adequate mounts, obliging his party to requisition a train of fifty packhorses they encountered carrying rice for the baths at Ise.[123] While this suggests an impressive enough premodern transfer of bulk goods, it is not clear that it represents what could exactly be called private trade. We are left with an overall image of a pre-monetized packhorse economy in the Japan of circa 700 A.D. that compares unfavorably with the "caravans of five hundred or more ox-wagons at a time" and "regular coinage" ascribed to India as early as the seventh century B.C., a millennium earlier.[124]

Despite the flourishing sea-borne trade between China and South and Southeast Asia, transportation from China to Japan remained difficult. In 631, perhaps making a virtue out of necessity, the Tang emperor absolved the Japanese of their supposed obligation to offer annual tribute on the grounds of the distance involved.[125] A Tang envoy sent to Japan in 641 described a voyage of "several months" that took him through the "gates of Hell."[126] In the eighth century, Ganjin's disciples were unresponsive to his request for volunteers to hazard a crossing to Japan, one of them finally explaining: "That country is too far. It is difficult to preserve one's life—not one in a hundred arrive across the vast waves and boundless waters."[127]

Neither Chinese nor Japanese states were well disposed towards unregulated trade, and both were equally suspicious of unregulated religion—especially as propagated by foreigners—freely circulating among the common people. In 700 Di Renjie 狄仁傑 (607–700), in China, complained of "wandering monks who all use the doctrines of the Buddha to deceive living persons," and of the presence of Buddhists in every village and marketplace.[128] Among many decrees of like nature that could be cited, in 656 the Tang banned Central Asians from practicing "magic," and in 727 ordered the concentration of Buddhist monks into a relatively few large, closed, monasteries.[129] The eighth-century Japanese state was equally concerned to isolate the Buddhists in monasteries, where they could recite sûtras for the protection of the state without causing a popular disturbance. In Japan, where the unity of government and religion (*saisei-itchi* 祭政一致) has long been a special tradition, Buddhist activity outside the monasteries was forbidden by law.[130]

But private trade and popular Buddhism both flourished anyway, most spectacularly in China, and to a lesser extent in Japan. Surprisingly, Buddhism and trade often

[125] *Xin Tang shu*, 220.6208.

[126] *Tang huiyao*, 99.1769.

[127] "Tô dai oshô tôseiden," 896.

[128] *Zizhi tongjian jinzhu* 資治通鑑今注 (New Commentary to the Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Governance), by Sima Guang (1019–86) (Taibei: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1966), 207.542.

[129] *Xin Tang shu*, 3.57. *Fozu tongji*, 40; T.49.374.

[130] *Ryô no gige* 令義解 (Commentary to the [Yôrô] Administrative Code), by Kiyowara no Natsuno, *Shintei zôho kokushi taikei* (fukyûban) (833; Tokyo: Yoshikawa kôbunkan, 1972), 2.82; *Ruijû sandai kyaku*, 2.74. See Ienaga Saburô, 108, 129; Satô Hiroo 佐藤弘夫, "Bukkyô kyôdan to shûkyô seikatsu" (Buddhist Orders and the Religious Life), *Kôza: bukkyô no juyô to henyô*, 6: *Nihon hen*, ed. Yamaori Tetsuo (Tokyo: Kôsei shuppansha, 1991), 84. For saisei-itchi, see Joseph M. Kitagawa, "*Matsuri* and *Matsuri-goto*: Religion and State in Early Japan," in *On Understanding Japanese Religion*, 117.

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flourished together, through a process of mutual stimulation. Since official sources were ideologically disinclined to report on either activity, still less any symbiotic positive interaction between them, we may turn to "the earliest collection of Buddhist legends in Japan," the *Nihon ryōiki* 日本靈異記, "a key document for understanding how Buddhism was accepted by the Japanese in the first few centuries after its introduction," to catch a relatively unguarded, unofficial, glimpse at the popular Buddhism of early Japan.[131]

Although caution needs to be taken against misinterpreting material that may well have been contaminated by Chinese and even Indian themes, the stories of miraculous reward and retribution contained in the *Nihon ryōiki* unfold amidst a remarkably mercantile, un-peasant-like, Japanese society. There is, for example, the story of a man who traveled with his older brother on business, and was murdered by his brother over a dispute concerning forty-odd catties of silver. His bones were left in a mountain pass near modern Kyoto, to be trampled upon by men and beasts for many years until a Koguryŏ monk rescued them in 646.[132] A reed merchant from Kawachi overloaded his packhorse, angrily thrashed it for not moving, and after selling the reeds killed it.[133] A self-ordained (unauthorized) Buddhist novice (*śrāmaṇera*), also from Kawachi, collected popular donations with the false claim that he was constructing a pagoda, and enjoyed the proceeds privately together with his wife.[134] The wife of a district official in Sanuki, known for her stinginess, waters down the wine she sells, forcibly extracts profit, and uses small measures when she makes loans but large measures when she collects repayment. The inevitable divine retribution shames her grief-stricken husband and children into atoning for her sins in 776 by donating all of the family's wealth to the church, and forgiving their debtors.[135]

These are miraculous tales, which cannot be accepted as literal fact. But perhaps they convey something of an authentic flavor that is missing from the official histories, bound as they are by elite ideological preconceptions. Such tales may serve as a useful corrective to our conventional understanding of both Buddhism and early Japanese society. In China Buddhism apparently took root among the common people before it found popularity with the elite.[136] In Japan, despite the leading role of the state and great families in promoting Buddhism, the popular dispersion of the religion may have been greater than we realize. And popular disregard for official regulation generally, even at the peak of the centralized *ritsuryō* 律令 state in eighth-century Japan, is evinced by the large numbers of Japanese commoners who routinely fled the government-imposed vision of them as registered, tax-paying and service-providing, farm households.[137]

Buddhism simultaneously censured the immoral excesses of, itself profited from, and circulated amidst a society in which small-scale, premodern trade was more widespread than is usually supposed. Nara Japan could hardly be described as a developed, urban, commercial state, but the "agricultural fundamentalism" of the Confucian-imperial bureaucratic ideal enshrined in official sources obscures the real diversity of occupations that did exist, and perhaps especially the "strong marine flavour" of early Japanese culture.[138] Ancient Japan was certainly less commercialized than contemporary China, but probably even more reliant upon seafaring.[139] And it was the open sea that finally brought Buddhism to Japan, together with an array of other international cultural, political, and economic influences that was rather richer than we often realize.

[131] Kyoko Motomochi Nakamura, trans., *Miraculous Stories from the Japanese Buddhist Tradition: the* Nihon Ryoiki *of the Monk Kyōkai* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1973), vi, 3.

[132] *Nihon ryōiki* (Tales of the Miraculous in Japan), by Keikai (Kyōkai), *Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei*, 30 (ca. 800; Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1996), 1.212–13, item 12. Nakamura tr., 123–24.

[133] *Nihon ryōiki*, 1.217, item 21. Nakamura tr., 132–33.

[134] *Nihon ryōiki*, 1.220, item 27. Nakamura tr., 139–40.

[135] *Nihon ryōiki*, 3.281–82, item 26. Nakamura tr., 257–59.

[136] Qu Xiaoqiang, 189–90.

[137] *Shoku Nihongi*, 1:4.154–57; 5.170–71; 6.224–25.

[138] Amino Yoshihiko, "Emperor, Rice, and Commoners," *Multicultural Japan: Palaeolithic to Postmodern*, ed. Donald Denoon et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1996), 237–38.

[139] The earliest known description of Japan suggests a pronounced maritime orientation. See *San guo zhi*, 30.854–55. The *Samguk sagi* (1:20 [Silla Basic Annals 1]) dates a raid on the Korean coast by one hundred Japanese warships to as early as 14 A.D. For "maritime China as a minor tradition," see John K. Fairbank, "Maritime and Continental in China's History," in *The Cambridge History of China*, vol. 12: *Republican China 1912–1949*, pt. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1983), 12–13.

REVIEW ARTICLES

A NEW EDITION OF *GILGAMESH AND AKKA*

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THE STUDY UNDER REVIEW, which is compact and handsomely produced, consists basically of two parts. First we have a general introduction, presenting the tale and discussing succinctly the history of publication, the literary structure, the materials of the plot and textual problems. Somewhat more detailed are discussions of three topics the author deemed of special importance: the historicity of the composition, the literary traditions concerning the war, and the governmental institutions and their historicity. The introduction ends with a brief literary and chronological evaluation. The second part of the book is devoted to the text. After a list (which regrettably does not describe the manuscripts) we find a detailed discussion of the affiliation of the manuscripts; then the text is presented in transliteration and translation, with a notice of variant readings and half a page of commentary. The book ends with a bibliography and a glossary.

On the whole the language is clear and adequate, although there are a number of solecisms and not quite idiomatic turns of phrase that might have been avoided; for example, the strange title of section 6: "The historicity of the composition,"[1] and what, if anything, is "exact literal meaning" (p. 4 n. 13)? Typographic errors are few: I have noted "followes" on p. 3; "occurence" on p. 6; "foudation" on p. 9; "scholing" on p. 19; "an usurper" on p. 31 (twice).

The text is presented as a composite, based mainly on MSS a and b, but there are a few pages of eclectic remarks on variant readings. This editorial policy is acceptable on the ground that, as the author says, a and b seem to represent the same tradition (p. 38), which, as J. Cooper pointed out ("Gilgamesh and Agga," *JCS* 33 [1981]: 224–39); is superior to the other manuscripts. Yet the provenance of MS a is unknown; it does not look like a Nippur text and it is in any case not identical to MS b. Unfortunately this policy results in some places in nonexistent lines (see below ad l. 42). These things may not always be very important, but they might have been clearly noted in the presentation of the text and not just relegated to the commentary on pp. 46–48, which does not always give sufficient information (and is sometimes misleading: see the comments on p. 47 ad l. 42, and compare with my remarks below ad l. 42). Furthermore, where MSS a and b disagree, it is not made clear why in some instances MS a is preferred over MS b or vice versa (compare l. 42 to lines 94–95). In the absence of a score, or a discussion of the relevant variants, the following notes might be useful.

In l. 1 it would have been more prudent to say that MS c has ak-(ka_3) rather than "aka for ak-ka_3" (p. 46 ad l. 1); furthermore, MS d has either ^{r}-gi_4^{1}-a (ak-)-ka, or ^{r}-gi_4^{1} a-ka, or, possibly, ^{r}-a^{1} a-ka. In l. 2 there seems to be no reason for not reading $^{r}re_6^{1}$ for $^{r}DU^{1}$ in MS c. In l. 3, I read -uru^{ki}-^{r}na^{r}-$še_3$ in MS f. In l. 6 (re)collation seems indicated for MS d: on the copy the third sign looks like a clear TI, but the one following looks like TIL; the erasure and the spelling in the next line argue for TI.TI corrected into TIL.TIL, with incomplete erasure of the first TI. In l. 8 MS a has an unequivocal ga-am_3-ma-sig_3-ge-en-de_3-en. In l. 10 MS a has mu-na-ni-$^{r}ib_2^{1}$-gi_4-gi_4. In l. 17 no text has nu-um-ma-gid_2; the $^{r}UM^{1}$ in MS a is possible, but not certain. Conforming to the author's stated policy (p. 46 fn. 1), I propose to read nu-um-gid_2 with MS b. In l. 24 the "restoration" of RA after ^{d}Gilgameš should be indicated as ^{d}Gilgameš(-ra), since no MS has the space for [-ra]. In l. 27 note that the signs for ḪAŠ and ANŠE are nearly identical to UNUG and KIŠ in the Old Babylonian script (I owe this observation to Niek Veldhuis). In l. 29 the arguments are convincing, but it might have been indicated more clearly that no MS has this (correct) text. In l. 33 MS a seems to have had a few signs after -a-ba-. In l. 39 MS c has more traces,

This is a review article of: *Gilgamesh und Akka*. By DINA KATZ. Library of Oriental Texts, vol. 1. Groningen: STYX PUBLICATIONS, 1993. Pp. viii + 55. HFl 39.50 (paper).

[1] The historicity of the composition can hardly be doubted, since we have it, and no one has ever suggested that it is a fake. What is meant is either its value as a historical document, or the historicity of the events related in the tale.

A number of these features necessarily shape its meaning, and therefore are open to difficulties in interpretation. Some of these problems are discussed as "textual problems" (pp. 4–11). The solution of the problem of the final part (who speaks the nomination formula, and the blessing and liberation formula?) proffered by Katz is undoubtedly correct in dividing the passage 102–112 into three parts and ascribing the nomination formula to Akka, the blessing and liberation formula to Gilgamesh. The story makes sense only in this way (in fact this interpretation was already defended by Cooper [1981] and the reviewer [1986]). Yet a major problem remains: exactly how did Gilgamesh win his victory? Klein (1983) correctly took l. 99 as meaning that Akka was captured and subsequently released by the magnanimous victor—an interpretation now accepted by all students of the poem. But how this happened is not fully solved. Katz speaks of a trick (p. 7), but does not clarify how the trick worked. Indeed, it would be hard to do so, for there is nothing in the text which can be plausibly construed as a trick. Furthermore, Gilgamesh is not, and has never been, known as a trickster. Why would the poet be so coyly reticent on this point? Rather than inventing a resolution, I would read what the text says. In an earlier study, "Towards a Reading of 'Gilgamesh and Akka'," *Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica* 17 (1986): 33–50, I pointed out that there is a mirroring of motifs, themes, stratagems, and even passages in each of the two parts of the poem. In this case, we should pay attention to what is found in lines 46/85 and 90ff. There, it is said that Gilgamesh's "fiery halo"—at which nobody, not even his own citizens (l. 85), can look without being thrown down in paralyzed awe—strikes down the enemy. This is a widespread motif in much later narratives: chivalry stories, from Alexander the Great onwards, abound in helmets, shields, and armor that dazzle and destroy the enemy.[9] In my reading of the story, it is the hero's fiery halo that confounds Kish's host, and enables Gilgamesh to capture its king.

In conclusion, while I regret that we as yet do not have a full edition of "Gilgamesh and Akka," I found this book thoroughly satisfying, well thought out, well written, and a pleasure to use. Dr. Katz is to be congratulated on her labor, and I look forward to reading more of her work.

[9] For the later periods we have Elena Cassin's *La Spendeur divine* (The Hague: Mouton, 1968). The fact that this halo is manufactured at Gilgamesh's request (lines 45–46) is an intriguing detail. The motif may be related to the Medusa (and hence, of course to Ḫuwawa!), and it deserves a thorough investigation.

RIDDLES AND ENIGMAS

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This collection of essays, edited by Galit Hasan-Rokem and David Shulman, is noteworthy for its state-of-the-art presentation of work on riddles—bringing many perspectives together, from traditional motif-analysis and psychoanalysis to studies of the riddle function in cultures ranging from the classical West to Judaism, classical India, and China. The book is a model of rigorous organization, rare in such wide-ranging collections; major issues that locate the comparative problem itself are uniformly kept in mind.

MUCH OF THE BEST RESEARCH that has been done recently on riddles and related enigmatic modes of discourse has been undertaken by folklorists, usually working with various non-literary or non-Western traditions, and developing a theoretical model of these genres that has been largely folkloristic in inspiration, i.e., largely taxonomic, with at least some attention to the language and the social function of riddles. The collection of essays reviewed here, which developed out of discussions held at the Institute of Advanced Studies at the Hebrew University during the academic year 1988–1989, makes a valuable contribution to the study of the riddle-genre on two counts. On the one hand, it is clear that all of the participants have wrestled with the extensive theoretical literature on the riddle and related modes. As a result the essays in this volume present a sophisticated overview of the present state of the art, and in some areas advance discussion well beyond previous treatments. On the other hand, the theoretical discussions in the volume are enriched by a wide range of source material, including a good number of essays devoted to the classical literary traditions that are a major focus of this journal.

The collection is framed by a brief introduction and an afterword written by the editors, which provide the collection's general point of departure, as well as a summing up of the consensus of opinion among the participants at the close of a year's work on the subject of riddles. These will be discussed at the end of this review.

The first of the collection's five sections is devoted to general and theoretical issues. "Riddles and Their Use," by A. Kaivola-Bregenhøj, offers a lucid sketch of the "traditional true riddle" in Finland, and the contexts within which it functioned, before its virtual disappearance there by the midway point of the twentieth century. Kaivola-Bregenhøj's approach is straightforwardly folkloristic, in the venerable style of the Finnish school. Its material is drawn from the Folklore Archive of the Finnish Literature Society, a collection of "about 30,000 riddles and some 500 pages of descriptions of riddle occasions" (p. 12). In treating such topics as the social occasions for riddling, the expressive devices and formulaic language of riddles, and the dialogical relationship between the riddle-question (with its concealing ambiguity) and the riddle-answer (with its triumphant wit), this article demonstrates the continuing vitality of the methods of riddle analysis that have been developed by folklorists.

It is followed by a quite different sort of essay by D. Handelman, entitled "Traps and Trans-formation: Theoretical Convergences between Riddle and Ritual." Unlike Kaivola-Bregenhøj's essay, which is rooted in the study of a definite corpus of riddles, Handelman's is triggered by the observation that "riddling and riddle contests are sometimes embedded in rituals in various parts of the world" (p. 37). In particular, the sort of ritual that Handelman has in mind is the "trans-formation" ritual (which, for reasons that are not quite clear, he distinguishes from the rite of passage). Of course, it has frequently been observed that riddling occurs, both in folklore and in ritual, on occasions that mark an individual's transformation or initiation: one frequently encounters riddling at weddings, funerals, the consecration of kings, rites of initiation, public sacrifices, new year's celebrations, etc. (cf., e.g., Handelman's discussion at p. 49). In this paper, Handelman attempts to come up with a conceptualization of the riddle that adequately explains why this association between riddles and rituals of a

This is a review article of: *Untying the Knot: On Riddles and Other Enigmatic Modes*. Edited by GALIT HASAN-ROKEM and DAVID SHULMAN. New York and Oxford: OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1996. Pp. x + 329. $65 (cloth); $29.95 (paper).

neighboring communities? Why do people persist in behavior which they know will provoke violence on the part of their neighbors? And why are these acts so often committed in the name of religion?" These are the sorts of questions the author of this book sets out to address. Kakar is a writer whose work seldom fails to stimulate, and this book is no exception. It provides a useful, convincing, and thought-provoking study of inter-communal violence in India, especially the Hindu-Muslim riots in Hyderabad in 1990, which at the same time sheds light on similar violence elsewhere in the world.

In seeking to understand such situations Kakar avoids easy answers. The perpetrators are not psychopaths, they are not sexually insecure, they did not suffer abuse as children. Nor are such conflicts to be explained as some do as being "really" due to secular causes deriving from colonialism. On the other hand, Kakar does acknowledge that religion is only one among many causes, and he sets out to examine the relative strengths of these causes.

He proceeds by visiting Hyderabad and talking to people involved on both sides of the 1990 riot. His study is based on extensive interviews with both perpetrators ("Warriors") and victims from both communities, and psychological tests such as the Giessen Test, the Morality Interview, and the Toy Construction method for children. Here Kakar shows great sympathy and understanding for his respondents, together with a critical assessment of their motives and explanations.

The thesis which emerges is that what lies behind such outbreaks of violence is the difficult process by which people struggle to form individual and communal identities in a modern and modernizing world. This process involves historical, political, socio-economic factors, besides religious ones, to be sure, but the religious elements are crucial and become entwined with the others. Historical memories, usually of past injustice, frequently involve stories of religious persecution or oppression. Political leaders manipulate religious myths and symbols for their own ends as they vie for power locally and at the federal Centre. Actions of other-religionists are frequently seen by the poor, who are usually the principal victims of communal violence, as responsible for their inferior economic status.

Religion is also used by individuals and communities positively to bolster their identity in the face of the Other. With its prescribed attitudes, rituals, moralities, and symbols it is ideally suited to do so. But Kakar is also aware that religions of all kinds have often been direct causes of bloody violence, that "religion brings to conflict between groups a greater emotional intensity and a deeper motivational thrust than language, region, or other markers of ethnic identity" (p. 192). And he is also aware that in all this perceptions are more important than facts, that they are "neither merely real not merely psychological" (p. 130) but a heady brew blending the two. This is what makes it so difficult to find solutions to the problems.

In his conclusion Kakar himself finally calls for a "truly multicultural polity" which allows communities to co-exist without enmity and which protects the rights of each. One can remain skeptical about the eventuality of such a polity, but this study is certainly an important contribution to the furthering of that goal. It is comprehensive, well written, and particularly relevant to our times. I give it an unqualified recommendation.

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The Śālistamba Sūtra and Its Indian Commentaries. By JEFFREY D. SCHOENING. Wiener Studien zur Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde, vols. 35.1, 35.2. Vienna: ARBEITSKREIS UNIVERSITÄT WIEN FÜR TIBETISCHE UND BUDDHISTISCHE STUDIEN, 1995. Pp. xx + 770, bibliography, tables, appendices, index.

The Buddha, gazing upon a rice plant sprouting, commented: "He who sees dependent arising sees the Dharma. He who sees the Dharma sees the Buddha." Such is the origin, and the core pronouncement, of this Mahāyāna sūtra. Famous for its exposition of universal relativity, more technically, "dependent origination," it was translated from the original Sanskrit into Chinese (six versions) and Tibetan, and from Tibetan into Mongolian. Some ninety percent of it survives in Sanskrit, mostly in the form of citations in other works. The earliest date is established by the translation of a version into Chinese by the Central Asian scholar known as Chih-ch'ien between 220 and 280 C.E. This study relies upon Sanskrit and Tibetan versions of the *Sūtra* and secondary literature.

In editing and translating the text and its major Indian commentaries, Dr. Schoening advances far beyond previous studies. He presents the edited Tibetan of a Tunhuang manuscript of the sūtra, supplemented by four other Tunhuang manuscripts and thirteen classical (Kanjur) editions. This sets a new standard in text-critical thoroughness. The introduction contains a lengthy discourse on text-critical work, demonstrating, among other things, the importance of Tunhuang manuscripts for identifying corruption of the text in later canonical traditions. Interlinear comments from Tunhuang manuscripts are noted, and they are helpful. The introduction also analyzes the Kanjur and Tanjur, focusing upon style of sūtra commentary. Here, Schoening is overly selective in his illustrative materials: use of Yogācārabhūmi literature might have modified some of his generalizations.

Schoening also edits and translates three Indian commentaries: a seventy-verse summary of the *Sūtra* plus a commentary, attributed to Nāgārjuna, and portions of a commentary to the

Sūtra by Kamalaśīla (eighth century). These survive only in Tibetan, although the last was translated from Tibetan into Chinese in the ninth century at Tunhuang.

The verse summary and its commentary are attributed to Nāgārjuna by Indian tradition (notably, by Bhavya) and Tibetan doxographers. Following conventional wisdom in the field, Schoening doubts the attribution on the grounds of doctrinal divergence from Nāgārjuna's *Madhyamakakārikās (MMK)*—for example, inclusion in these texts of "Yogācāra" terminology such as the three natures (*trisvabhāva*). This reasoning is faulty, and it is arguably indicative of the immature state of modern Buddhist studies. Were Bhavya and other ancients obtuse in failing to differentiate authors by school, and schools by doctrine? Or do we nowadays offer a one-dimensional view by failing to acknowledge doctrinal complexity, mutual influence, or an author's intellectual development? By the rigid standards set by the conventional wisdom, how many variants of Plato would we identify?

In these commentaries by "Nāgārjuna," and in the "three natures" work that is also attributed him by redactors of the Tanjur, the three-natures theory is found in its classical form, e.g., postdating the *Lankāvatāra* and *Samdhinirmocana* sūtras. That is to say, the theory incorporates the "Nagarjunian" two-truth ontological categories (conventional and ultimate) in a tripartite division of epistemic issues. From the point of view of the *MMK*, dependent origination is a conventional topic; it is thus characterized at p. 78 of this *Sūtra*'s commentary and Kamalaśīla also characterizes the *Sūtra* as enigmatic or purposive, *ldem por dgongs pa* (pp. 89, 99), whereas ultimate truth has no causes and conditions. As conventional truth, this *Sūtra* and its commentaries have the less-than-ultimate purpose of eliminating attachment. Nāgārjuna might well compose a commentary with apparently Yogācāran or other "conventional-truth" formulations for these heuristic purposes. (See the discussion of the "intentionality" [*abhisaṁdhi*] of the Buddha's teachings at p. 218.)

On the other hand, the sūtra-versification attributed to Nāgārjuna is clearly dependent upon his *MMK* for its analysis of causation and its technique of reducing, to absurdity, spurious philosophic theories and "common sense" understandings of causation.

The focus of the *Sūtra* is causation. A seed, with the assistance of other causes and conditions, gives rise to a sprout. The influence of earth, water, and so forth are easy to understand, as are the irrelevance of God, Self, and other supernatural notions. A propaedeutic aim of the *Sūtra* is the elimination of unedifying questions—e.g., what was I in the past?—and the elimination of the false beliefs of śramaṇas and brāhmaṇas, e.g., self, and beliefs in superstition and magical technology, such as festivities, omens, etc., of which Kamalaśīla provides an interesting list.

In this "conventional-truth" account, the actual connection between seed and sprout is problematic. The seed "ceases" and gives rise to the sprout, according to the *Sūtra* (p. 281). To explain this, Kamalaśīla invokes the theory of momentariness: the sprout arises at the moment that the cause ceases (p. 286). Momentariness is also invoked to explain the transition from death to rebirth, between which there is no interval; the doctrine of an intervening period (*antarābhava, bar do*), associated with the Sammitīya school and prevalent in later Mahāyāna, is absent here.

Also unclear in this explanation is why cause and result are similar—why, for example, can the farmer plant a seed of rice with confidence that it will produce a rice plant, and not barley?

So dependent origination explains ordinary cause and effect, as in farming; in its form of the twelvefold chain it explains the process of death and rebirth; and it explains the process of perception and the variety of factors that create consciousness.

The translations are competently done. Translation of the technical terminology is mainstream, as befits a dissertation project (University of Washington). Only a few suggestions on usage are in order.

For *dgos pa'i dgos pa, prayojana-prayojana*, "further purpose" is preferable to "purpose of the purpose" (pp. 32, 33).

At p. 237, the variant reading attested by note 2 is preferable: the Buddha sees the dharmas that are seen by both the learners and the learned, not that the Buddha sees the dharmas of the Buddha, the learner, and the learned. This is clarified by commentary at p. 239. Also, the primary meaning of *dharma* here is doctrine.

The Tibetan phrase *sbyar bar bya* means "one should add," not "apply," as in (p. 242 n. 5): "to the heterodox (*tīrthika*) nihilist theories mentioned in the text one should add those that derive from the Yogācāra."

Karma is wholesome, unwholesome, and neutral, not "immovable" (p. 101).

In context of the twelvefold chain, *abhisaṁskāra* would be better rendered as "produce" or "manufacture" than "accomplish."

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Syllables of Sky: Studies in South Indian Civilization in Honour of Velcheru Narayana Rao. Edited by DAVID SHULMAN. Delhi: OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1996. Pp. xi + 478, plates, index of subjects. $29.95.

Those who know David Shulman are well aware that he has found the experience of studying and working with V. Narayana Rao to be enormously satisfying, stimulating, and enriching. Likewise, those who know Narayana Rao are aware that

the admiration is reciprocated. Here we have a case of two humanist scholars engaged in a collaboration that has contributed significantly to knowledge about South Asian civilization.

The volume under review is a collection of essays edited by David Shulman as a tribute to Narayana Rao, and the contributors are all scholars with significant accomplishments to their credit in the field of South Asian studies. The introductory essay by Shulman offers a glimpse of Narayana Rao's remarkable career and journey of self-discovery which began in a remote village in coastal Andhra and eventually brought him to Madison, Wisconsin. Shulman's essay—both a capsule intellectual biography and an introduction to major themes in Narayana Rao's work—suggests a close interconnection between the particulars of Narayana Rao's personal experience and the originality of his insights into Indian, and specifically Telugu, literary culture.

In a sense the subtitle of this volume—Studies in South Indian Civilization—is a misnomer, because collectively these essays do not really make a case for and are not predicated on the notion of "South India" as a definable civilizational entity. In his introductory essay Shulman describes this collection as "perhaps the first to attempt an Andhra-centric vision of south India" (p. 17). While it is true that the majority (but not all) of the essays are concerned in one way or another with Telugu textual materials or with sites of cultural practice located in Andhra, no vision of south Indian civilization per se emerges from the collection. Telugu and Andhra may be operative terms for many of the contributors to this volume, but "South India" more broadly is not, except in the sense that some of the contributors tend to duplicate by analogy the problematic tendency of many Tamil scholars to treat Tamil and Tamilnadu as synecdoches for South India.

But the issue of "South India" aside, the fruits of some impressive and important research is brought together in this volume, and whether by design or chance, there is considerable interplay among these essays. Excepting Shulman's introduction, the essays are grouped in four sections. The first section—"South Indian Folklore and Literary Theory"—contains the late A. K. Ramanujan's exegesis of a Kannada folktale; Stuart Blackburn's examination of "animal-husband" tales, a folktale type well represented in India; and a typological analysis of Telugu written and oral texts by Bh. Krishnamurti. The second section—"Classical Literature"—includes Wendy Doniger's interpretation of sexual masquerades as a mythic theme in India; David Shulman's elicitation of a classical Andhran poetic vision through a close reading of Allasāni Peddana's *Manucaritramu* and its antecedents; an essay by George Hart which delineates emotional and ethical archetypes in classical Indian literature and then examines bhakti as a systematic violation of these archetypes; and Paula Richman's exploration of how the conventions of the Tamil literary genre *pillaittamil*, a kind of praise poem in which a poet addresses a deity or extraordinary human as a child, have been adapted by Hindu, Muslim, and Christian poets. The third section, titled "Anthropology/Religion," contains three essays—David Knipe's examination of textual sources on and ritual practices associated with the planet Śani (Saturn); Joyce Burkhalter Flueckiger's report on her work with a Muslim woman living in Hyderabad who maintains a thriving practice as a healer; and Don Handelman's detailed description and interpretation of an annual festival (*jātra*) performed in Tirupati in honor of the goddess Gaṅgammā. The final section, titled "South Indian History and History of Art," contains essays by Sanjay Subrahmanyam, Cynthia Talbot, and Phillip Wagoner. The subject of Subrahmanyam's essay is succinctly captured by its subtitle, "The Tirumala-Tirupati Temple Complex in Early European Views and Ambitions, 1540–1660." Talbot examines the notion of female rulership in medieval India, focusing on the reign of Rudrama-devi (1163–95), the fourth independent ruler in the Kakatiya dynasty. Finally, Philip Wagoner examines temple architecture under the Kakatiyas, and identifies four architectural "modes" which are respectively associated with "public" and "private" cultic environments.

The organization of the essays into four sections and the section headings ("South Indian Folklore and Literary Theory," etc.) in most instances does not illuminate the distinctive literary and cultural visions elucidated in these essays. One might even say that the categorization of the essays is incompatible with one of the major themes of Narayana Rao's work, as articulated by Shulman, namely, the inadequacy of both canonical Indian and Western theoretical frameworks to an inquiry into deep levels of metastructure and internal process in South Asian literary (and one might add also other kinds of cultural) traditions (pp. 13–14). But, as noted above, there is considerable interplay of themes and ideas among the essays, even if these are not highlighted by the volume's organization into conventional disciplinary categories. The thematic rubric which stands out most prominent'y is that of gender—in fact, a subset of these essays constitutes a very significant contribution to the study of gender-related conceptualizations and practices in South Asia. The essays by Blackburn, Doniger, Flueckiger, Handelman, Ramanujan, and Talbot are particularly noteworthy in this regard. A few of the other topical rubrics that emerge from the collection include authority (Flueckiger, Krishnamurti, Talbot), the fluidity of Indian cultural formations (Handelman, Talbot), and genre (Blackburn, Doniger, Krishnamurti, Ramanujan, Richman, Shulman, Wagoner). While gender, authority, genre, etc., are not in and of themselves constructs specific to South Asia, the work represented in this volume clarifies some of the culturally specific forms they may take in South Asian contexts.

To sum up, though this reviewer has reservations about the organization and self-representation of this collection, the quality of the essays themselves is generally excellent, and many of them work in tandem to suggest some exciting currents in the development of knowledge about South Asian civilization.

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Disputed Dharmas: Early Buddhist Theories on Existence: An Annotated Translation of the Section on Factors Dissociated from Thought from Saṅghabhadra's Nyāyānusāra. By Collett Cox. Studia Philologica Buddhica Monograph Series XI. Tokyo: The International Institute for Buddhist Studies, 1995. Pp. xxiii, 479.

Collett Cox has given us one of those books that every specialist in Indian Buddhism will need to possess but seldom will read, by virtue of the subject matter's inherent opacity. A reworking of her 1982 doctoral dissertation from Columbia University, *Disputed Dharmas* is a fine piece of philological scholarship which investigates the questions and controversies of phenomena dissociated from thought (*viprayukta-saṃskāra-dharmāḥ*). This category of events (dharmas, which Cox calls factors) was developed by the Abhidharma doctors partly in response to philosophical challenges from their Brahmanical antagonists, partly to gloss over internal doctrinal difficulties. Incredibly, this category was at one time among the sexiest of topics within the Abhidharma schools of Buddhist intellectuals in monastic India. As an arena of disputation, the category brought into fine focus the disparity between the two leading factions of Abhidharma advocates in north India. Cox has done yeoman's service by patiently outlining the circumstances and ideas of the two major disputants—Vasubandhu for the Sautrāntikas and Saṅghabhadra for the Vaibhāṣikas—and translating relevant portions from Xuánzàng's Chinese rendering (T.29.1562) of the lost Sanskrit of Saṅghabhadra's *Nyāyānusāra*. Executing this strategy, *Disputed Dharmas* is divided into three principal sections: "Historical Introduction" (pp. 1–63), "Introductory Commentaries" (pp. 65–171), and "Translation" (pp. 173–411), followed by an abbreviated list of Chinese characters, bibliography, and a very useful index (pp. 413–79).[1]

The "Historical Introduction" is an excellent summation of the received wisdom of philological enquiry on the corpus of Abhidharma literature, although modern Abhidharmikas will inevitably quibble over some of the representations given. Cox presents the two standard hermeneutical etymologies of the term *abhidharma* and discusses the methods of exegesis found in this variety of literature, including differences of opinion on how the form began. Moving to the background of the controversy at hand, she delineates the circumstances surrounding the formation of the orthodox Kashmiri Vaibhāṣika tradition from the larger corpus of Sarvāstivāda texts and the challenges to the Vaibhāṣika doctrines by the Sautrāntikas. She finally specifies the debate in the related works of Vasubandhu—the most notorious Sautrāntika, whose *Abhidharmakośa* and *Bhāṣya* are the most important surviving Sanskrit representatives of the massive Abhidharma corpus—and Saṅghabhadra, who both imitated and attacked the *Abhidharmakośa* and *Bhāṣya*.

Part II, "Introductory Commentaries," is a necessary attempt to explain to the uninitiated the nature of the "factors dissociated from thought" and something of the background. Quickly the reader finds himself in a world in which the nomenclature and jargon are at war with normative English comprehension. Thus, "Ontological Perspective Underlying Possession and Nonpossession" (pp. 87–88) is not a rigorous analysis of the nature of shamanic states and of healing from the action of spirits by exorcists on behalf of the possessed, but an examination of the ideas concerning "acquisition/obtainment," or however the term *prāpti* is translated. Cox's introduction of the nomenclature is essential, because it dominates the entire second half of the book, part III, which is devoted to the translation of an extended refutation of Vasubandhu's section on the dissociated phenomena in Saṅghabhadra's *Nyāyānusāra*.

I have found myself occasionally quibbling with Cox's interpretations of specific items, such as her attempt to extend the identity of lists (*mātṛkā*) to both the Vinaya as well as the Abhidharma, thereby calling it into question as one of the important mnemonic methods feeding the movement that was to become Abhidharma. Certainly, the term *mātṛkā* was applied to Vinaya summaries—and even infrequently extended to other summaries, as well. Yet the identity of those who memorize these lists as different from those who memorize the Vinaya or the Sūtras is too well established to admit of such an interpretation. In all likelihood, the "upholders of the lists" (*mātṛkādhara*) represented the class of monks from whom the Abhidharma developed as an institutionalization of mnemonics, their standardization and exegesis. She is certainly right in

[1] Without being obsessive, I must call attention to the privileging of German and Japanese authors in the bibliography. Cox's list of English language contributions to Buddhist studies seldom climbs out of the immediate post-World-War-II period—unless done by German or Japanese authors—and are not an entirely accurate reflection of more recent activity. On a lighter note, Étienne Lamotte's corpus has been inadvertently merged with that of Louis de La Vallée Poussin (p. 432).

pointing out that these lists were far more important to the genre among Theravāda authors, but that does not preclude their contribution to Sanskrit literature.

This brings me to more substantive qualms. I continue to find myself uneasy with the historical or philosophical representations of those wedded exclusively to philological methodology. For example, Cox's historical introduction could have been markedly improved by a broader representation of Adhidharma within the culture of the Iranian language speakers (Kuṣāṇa, Sassanian) who dominated the Gandhāra area and continually threatened Indian orthodoxy in Kashmir. The reality of such threats was ultimately to materialize with the Ephthalite invasion of the upper Jhelum around 520 C.E. However, in Buddhist studies today, those who account themselves exclusively philologists seldom venture into issues proposed by mainstream historians. The unfortunate consequence of this proclivity is for specialists in śāstras to operate in a curiously sealed environment in which "historical" discussions unaccountably avoid much of the stuff of history. For example, the quantity of Abhidharma literature combined with its very arcaneness simply begs the obvious question: why on earth did otherwise presumably sane Buddhist monks dispense extraordinary amounts of their time in pursuit of this material? We might observe that questions of authority and authenticity seem to come into play in selected areas, but Cox's allusions to these issues leave the reader less than satisfied.

Similarly, the topical treatment in part II is an accurate philological statement of the material. It requires, though, extended initiation into the arcane literature of the Abhidharma to be of value and, even then, leaves the reader wandering in a dimly lit field. Part of the problem, to be sure, simply comes from the materials' lack of wider treatment—were we more frequently presented with Abhidharma texts, familiarity would offset some of the opacity. Yet such facts simply indicate that a more thorough philosophical treatment of Abhidharma doctrines would be in everyone's best interests. Traditionally, philologists have done spade work in translation and representation, while philosophically inclined specialists have taken the material thus rendered and unpacked it for a wider reading audience. This method, however, frequently ensures that the philosophers questioning the material in some depth do so with blind spots as to ramifications within other areas of the doctrinal corpus. When the received language of the material remains its original Sanskrit (whatever the textual vicissitudes), then the process is to some degree justifiable, or at least comprehensible. When the language, though, is as specialized as Chinese translations of Abhidharma, then the onus of interpretation bears more heavily on the specialist. For example, chapter 10, "Name, Phrase, and Syllable," begins and ends with the suggestion that Ābhidharmikas participated in the larger discourse of the Grammarians and may have contributed to the discussion on *sphoṭa*. This is an intriguing suggestion, but it is dropped almost as soon as it is broached, disposed of with a few references to some older literature on the Grammarians instead of granting it the treatment Cox evidently believes it deserves. So, while Cox employs the diction approved in the sphere of philological enterprise, she could have extended her discussion of the central topics in clearer language for the benefit of all her readers.

These qualms need not detract from the fine quality of the fundamental text, and it remains true that any book that tries to be all things to all people does little for anyone. Cox treads a well-worn path in her method, and if some Indologists might wish philologists to pursue a more thorough historical treatment of their authors, few could question the excellence of her philological work per se. While stiff going, *Disputed Dharmas* will reward those with the courage and time to read it—it reveals some of the more important discussion of late Gupta Buddhist scholasticism. Professor Cox must be admired for her own fortitude in bringing this valuable material before us.

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From Early Vedanta to Kashmir Shaivism: Gaudapada, Bhartṛhari, and Abhinavagupta. By NATALIA ISAYEVA. SUNY Series in Religious Studies. Albany: STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK PRESS. 1995. Pp. x + 10 + 197. $16.95 (paper).

I found this book truly rewarding in only one area: the comparison it attempts of early Vedāntic thought with the thought found in the writings of certain Eastern Orthodox Christian writers, particularly with the teachings of the Hesychasts or the views of Gregory Palamas, Pavel Florensky, and Alexei Losev. As I knew nothing about the thinkers in the Hesychast line, the information Isayeva gave about them and about the similarities of their thinking with the thinking of Gauḍapāda, etc., made a significant addition to my knowledge. However, it follows from the same fact that I am not qualified to judge the accuracy of her representation of the Hesychasts or of the philosophers allied with them. I can only ascertain the philological and historical accuracy of her discussion of the philosophers from the Sanskrit tradition. The effort I made in that direction—I regret to have to state—failed to inspire confidence.

In Isayeva's writing, some transliterations of Sanskrit words are so wrong that they leave no doubt about a less-than-firm grasp of the language; e.g., *prājña-ghana* for *ghana-prajña* on p. 22, *Satakāyana* for *Śākaṭāyana* on p. 71, *Pariklṛṇa-* for

Praklṛṇa- on p. 79, *ṣaṇḍa-bhāṣā* (which would mean 'language of the eunuchs') for *sandhā/sandhyā-bhāṣā* 'twilight language, secret language' on p. 158.

It goes without saying that not all of Isayeva's translations are accurate (e.g., those on pp. 90, 99, 100, 109). This is especially the case in those rare instances in which she tries to interpret a text differently from her predecessors. The different translations she offers sometimes do not even fall in what we may call a gray area—that is, the area in which scholars can reasonably be expected to differ in their interpretations; they are contextually (e.g., p. 103) or grammatically impossible (e.g., p. 106, p. 115; at the latter place the indeclinable *ṛte* 'without' is taken as the locative singular of *ṛta*).

Although occasionally Isayeva offers comments on issues of authorship, chronology, etc., it is clear that she is able to offer them only on the basis of what she has read in secondary literature. As far as I can see, there is no philological issue which she has newly detected. Nor has she settled any old philological issue even in probabilistic or tentative terms by referring to the primary or original Sanskrit sources. As most of her book aims at determining the historical development of certain ideas, its unsteady philological foothold makes one wonder all the more about the reliability of the development she has determined.[1]

In keeping with her exclusive reliance on secondary literature, such as translations and earlier studies in European languages, is Isayeva's silence on some questions that are clearly relevant to the approach and scope of her investigation. I have, for example, the following in mind. (a) Was the view of the Grammarian philosophers represented by Bhartṛhari ever *called* Vedānta? (b) What really is the evidence for Tantric, as distinct from the later Kashmir Śaiva, elements in early Vedānta? Are there any common elements beyond the fourfold classification of *vāc*? (c) Must Śaṅkara's Vedānta be considered mature? Must Śaṅkara be better simply because he is later? Is it not possible that he was not informed or was not adequately informed about some of his predecessors? Is it beyond the range of possibility that he misjudged or distorted certain logically stronger elements of early Vedānta? (d) What statements or expressions in Bhartṛhari establish that he is aware of the "co tion (*spanda*) of the sacred mantra" as claime it proper to view Śaṅkara, as he has been view someone concerned with poetic expressions *in h writings*? Does *śuṣka* in the given context no concern for *āgama* or *śruti*"?

As indicated so far, Isayeva's exposition review of what the earlier explorers of the field logical determination of what certain ancient vocated, comparison with Hesychastic thought philosophy.[2] All these four approaches are i for the kind of investigation she has undertake have been attempted in a relatively short space been done to any of them. One also senses a whether the book should be a survey of certain point of view of a particular historical recon Vedānta") or whether it should be devoted to th a single concept ("net of energy or vibration") by the selected authors. In the information she thinking of Gauḍapāda, Bhartṛhari and Abhi are many details that do not seem to bear up concept which assumes prominence in the con If the concept was intended to give thematic sentation, it disappears too frequently from the serve as a unifying element.

Isayeva uses appropriate metaphorical or p communicate to the reader certain challenging sophical notions and views. She does have th the inexplicit and to capture the drifts and te statements in vivid, forceful language. She i she thus poeticizes philosophy, but the poetici goes beyond the role of a device of communic a substitute for evidence or logical argument. reading too much into the explanatory analogi ical expressions of the Sanskrit authors (e.g.,

The difference of quality of scholarship see lications on South Asia puzzles me. It is diffic a press which can publish the methodologica of Wilhelm Halbfass can also publish the we sporadically reliable book reviewed here.

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[1] To make matters more problematic, the knowledge displayed of secondary literature is not always accurate, sufficiently comprehensive, or up-to-date. Nor is it always conveyed unambiguously. For example, regarding Bhartṛhari's commentary on the *Mahābhāṣya*, by now available in at least two editions covering the entire available manuscript, Isayeva writes as if it were unpublished (p. 72). On p. 16, she does not tell us how the dating of Gauḍapāda preferred there is to be reconciled with the tradition that Gauḍapāda was Śaṅkara's teacher's teacher, which seems to meet her approval on p. 2.

[2] In the last I include the author's own "ta Sanskrit texts literally say and her attempts tc that would connect scattered passages.

the toponymy of Ebla, but also of its prosopography and sociopolitical conditions. But in using the work they should keep in mind that the computer is very useful for arranging the input in any desirable sequence, but that its analysis must still be done in the old-fashioned way, and that the transliterations chosen by the editors are not always the only or the best ones. It would also be advisable, when reading the commentaries dealing with geography and comparative toponymy, to have before one's eyes a map of the northern parts of Syria and Mesopotamia.

THERAVĀDA TRANSFORMED?*

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Two important recent books by Richard Gombrich (and Gananath Obeyesekere) on the "modernization" of Buddhism in Ceylon are examined. Among other commentary, Walpola Rahula's spirited attacks on "innovation" are placed in context.

FOR REASONS I WILL TRY TO MAKE apparent further along in this review one should read these two books as a unit. They both treat the phenomenon of change in the Theravāda Buddhism preserved and practiced by the Sinhala people of Sri Lanka. Their account and their interesting explanations of changes in the Theravāda from its origin in ancient India up to the "transforming" innovations recently introduced by Sinhala urbanites in and around Colombo are rendered in a lucid prose and an engaging narrative construction that make their authors' scholarship accessible to Sri Lanka specialists, Buddhists and buffs alike. This literary excellence will make pleasurable the repeated close readings that are necessary for an ample grasp of the data and its interpretation presented here by Richard Gombrich and Gananath Obeyesekere.

Gombrich, an Indologist at the University of Oxford, and Obeyesekere, a native of Sri Lanka who holds a professorship in anthropology at Princeton University, have already established their names as well as a canon of research literature in the study of the religious life of Sinhala Buddhists in Sri Lanka. One recalls at once such notable book-length examples as Gombrich's *Precept and Practice: Traditional Buddhism in the Rural Highlands of Ceylon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971) and Obeyesekere's *Medusa's Hair: An Essay on Personal Symbols and Religious Experience* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981).

In *Theravāda Buddhism: A Social History from Ancient Benares to Modern Colombo*, Gombrich develops social explanations for "three major points of change" that have occurred in Theravāda's history. He selects the Buddha's founding of this Sasana (religion) in India some 2500 years ago; its migration from India to Sri Lanka, where a redefinition of Buddhist identity happened; and within the last 150 years, a configuration of responses and reactions to the Protestant Christian missionary accouterment to Great Britain's colonization of Sri Lanka, a development widely designated nowadays as "Protestant Buddhism." It would be difficult to argue sensibly against the choice of these three instances of "major change" in Theravāda, particularly since Gombrich gives a persuasive defense of his selection without claiming that these are the only instances of definitive change.

There is similarly no compelling reason to challenge the basic assumptions of his concept of social history. He holds that the social historian's primary responsibility is to explain change while understanding that the historian, like every other human being, cannot explain everything. He holds further that changes in a religion arise in response to problem situations within a society and are, hence, appropriate phenomena for empirical study and for causal explanation in social terms that may conflict with the metaphysical explanations proffered by the religion itself. He considers the agents and subjects of innovation in social history to be, typically, human individuals whose intended objectives evoke group patronage, although disasters in nature exemplify notable exceptions and some intended actions result in unintended consequences.

Gombrich acknowledges here (p. 25) the limited usefulness of a general definition of religion, as he did earlier in *Precept and Practice* (p. 11). He accepts religion defined broadly as a system of belief in and patterned interaction with superhuman beings. Gombrich

* This is a review article of: *Theravāda Buddhism: A Social History from Ancient Benares to Modern Colombo*. By RICHARD F. GOMBRICH. Pp. x + 237. London and New York: ROUTLEDGE & KEGAN PAUL, 1988. $55 (cloth); $15.95 (paper).

Buddhism Transformed: Religious Change in Sri Lanka. By RICHARD GOMBRICH and GANANATH OBEYESEKERE. Pp. xvi + 484. Princeton: PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1988. $49.50 (cloth); $16.95 (paper).

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reasons that this general definition of religion will not suffice when one investigates and writes the social history of a specific religion. To understand Theravāda in its particular social contexts one has to probe beyond the marks that identify it as a religion in the general sense. One must determine what the Theravādins themselves define as their Buddhist identity, and as a scholar Gombrich determines to find for himself "what exactly is involved in being [this kind of] Buddhist" (pp. 15 and 25). He adverts to this question of specifically Theravāda identity five times (pp. 74–75, 138–39, 141–42, 178, 194) in the seven chapters that follow the introduction. Although he characterizes his achievement in this book as "essentially a presentation" of research results accomplished by esteemed "predecessors" (p. ix), he allows that "if this book breaks new ground it will mainly be in my treatment of this question" of Theravāda Buddhist identity (p. 23).

Gombrich demonstrates exemplary professional etiquette in his generous acknowledgment of large dependence on other scholars, but knowledgeable readers will readily discern that he has overstated his disclaimer to originality in this book. The concept of a social construction of Theravāda's entire history in a single essay is as highly original as it is ambitious. The introduction gives as brilliant and as unpompous a discussion of theoretical considerations as I have read anywhere, and the seven chapters present an unprecedented construction of Theravāda's story. This book exemplifies laudable originality in another sense, probably a consequence unintended by its author. It constitutes a widely usable text in introductory courses in Buddhism. A listing of the chapter titles will attest this evaluation: "Gotama Buddha's Problem Situation," "The Buddha's Dhamma," "The Sangha's Discipline," "The Accommodation Between Buddhism and Society in Ancient India," "The Buddhist Tradition in Sri Lanka," "Protestant Buddhism," and "Current Trends, New Problems." As an introduction *Theravāda Buddhism* differs from the two most often selected at the present time. Walpola Rahula's *What the Buddha Taught* clings closely to the Pali canon and commentaries in succinctly stating the definitive teachings ascribed to the Buddha, and N. Ross Reat's *Introduction to Buddhism* describes Buddhist religion in its several prisms, not merely in that of the Theravāda. Gombrich makes it easier than either of these for beginning students of Buddhism to grasp the meaning of the definitive teachings by presenting them in the sequence of a historical narrative of Theravāda's social contexts and by limiting their meaning to that given by the Theravādin.

Irrespective of its merits as a prospective textbook, *Theravāda Buddhism* can serve scholars and other critical readers instructively as an expanded preface to *Buddhism Transformed: Religious Change in Sri Lanka*. In this latter book, Gombrich and Obeyesekere "describe, analyze and interpret *recent changes* in the religious life of Sinhala Buddhists" (p. 3, italics added), changes they encountered in the collaborated research project they began in the 1970s and sustained for more than a decade. From a careful reading of *Theravāda Buddhism* one gets an informed historical perspective suitable for locating and assessing the numerous innovations of belief and practice that Gombrich and Obeyesekere found among urban middle and working class Sinhala Buddhists living in the nation's capital, Colombo, and its suburbs. Such a reading will also acquaint one with the nuanced vocabulary and syntax of the social description, analysis and explanation employed in *Buddhism Transformed*.

Part, if not all, of *Theravāda Buddhism* was written later than *Buddhism Transformed*, and the sophisticated distinction it draws between "communal religion" and "soteriology" helps us to understand the two discrete components of "the religious life of Sinhala Buddhists" analyzed in *Buddhism Transformed*. A whole generation of investigators have noted that the religious life of these Buddhists includes something broader than Theravāda Buddhism. In 1963 Michael Ames observed that "magical animism and Buddhism" coexist without being confused in one Sinhalese religious system (*Journal of Asian Studies*, 22.1: 21–53). He concluded that these two religious units "do not lie on one continuum, but on two intersecting ones" and serve respectively the worldly (*laukika*) and the supra-worldly (*lōkōttara*) interests of the Sri Lankan Buddhists (pp. 22, 40). The same year Gananath Obeyesekere himself published a study examining the composite character of Sinhala Buddhism. He observed that some Buddhist intellectuals as well as Western investigators are puzzled by finding "magic and a polytheistic pantheon" combined in practice with Theravāda Buddhism. He cautioned against equating Sinhalese Buddhism with Theravāda and advised that it be seen instead "as a fusion and a synthesis of beliefs derived from Theravada with other non-Theravada beliefs to form one integrated tradition" ("The Great Tradition and the Little Tradition in the Perspective of Sinhalese Buddhism," *Journal of Asian Studies*, 22.2: 148). Other researchers have tried unsuccessfully to make sense of the combination of diverse and seemingly incompatible elements that make up the religious life of Sinhala Buddhists.

In *Theravāda Buddhism* and *Buddhism Transformed* Gombrich and Obeyesekere enable us to see that "spirit religion" and Gotama Buddha's recipe for individual salvation function commensally in a single organic relationship. For matters pertaining to life, death, and, in large measure, rebirth, Sri Lankan Buddhists have a form of communal religion, the resources and options of "the spirit religion," which includes gods and other supernatural beings with varying powers and jurisdictions. For matters of a salvation that will enable an individual to transcend life, death and rebirth, and hence to transcend the jurisdiction and aid of all natural and supernatural beings, these Sinhala Buddhists have the Buddha's program for individuals as set forth in the Pāli scriptures and promulgated by the monks of the Sangha.

Gombrich and Obeyesekere found that Sinhala Buddhist urbanites have recently innovated radical changes of beliefs and practice in both the spirit religion and the soteriological component of their religious life. The status and province of some of the gods have been redefined and this is reflected in the positions they are given at the Buddhist temples. Also changed in the spirit religion is the introduction of darker aspects of some deities and the accepted practice of black magic. Although there are hints that the worship of the god Kataragama encroaches upon the Buddha's exclusive provision for salvation, the Buddha remains *sui generis* and unquestionably first in the Buddhists' perception and ranking of the supra-naturals in their pantheon.

The truly arresting changes are those reported for the Buddhist unit of the Sinhala religious life. Our two seasoned social scientists, refer to these as "startling," "important departures from tradition," "the creation of tradition," and eventually, since they are developments within and beyond Protestant Buddhism, these changes constitute a "Buddhism transformed." In 1963 Michael Ames discerned that "Sinhalese Buddhism appears to be facing a fundamental transformation" ("Ideological and Social Change in Ceylon," *Human Organization*, 22.1: 46). One does not have to be a Sri Lanka specialist to understand that a transformation of Theravāda has occurred when lay meditation centers, patronized generously by numerous lay people assuming responsibility for the promulgation of the Buddha's doctrine and seeking to realize nirvana themselves through their meditation regimen, rank equally with or take precedence over temples and monasteries in the Sinhala society. Rather than discuss and evaluate the significance of changes I find interesting in *Buddhism Transformed*, I will reiterate some observations expressed by Aggamahāpaṇḍita Walpola Sri Rahula, the Chancellor of the University of Kelaniya in Sri Lanka. Across a monastic career that spans most of this century, the Ven. Dr. Rahula has opposed the provision for deity worship at Buddhist temples and has maintained that pristine Buddhism preserved in the Pāli scriptures by monks in Sri Lanka is utterly rational and without analogue among other religions. He has disparaged field research studies of Buddhism as dealing with matters extraneous to the substance of authentic Buddhism.

In the *Daily News*, Colombo, Monday, April 22, 1991, the Ven. Dr. Rahula published an appeal entitled "Protect Buddhism from Pollution." He begins with the declaration that "in the whole history of Buddhism throughout the world, the oldest, most authentic and unbroken tradition is the Theravada" which began at the First Council "three months after the Buddha's *Parinirvana*." This "pure and genuine Theravada" was brought to Sri Lanka "in the third century B.C." by Mahinda Thera, the son of Emperor Asoka of India. "From that time up to this day, the Maha Sangha and the devout Buddhists of this country have preserved it." Although occasional "extraneous influences" have entered the culture, "all those pollutions were repulsed by a firm opposition from both the Sangha and the laity," as was the "attempt to introduce into this country a Mahayana Sect of the Japanese clergy" as recently as 1990.

Rahula names "various forms of pollution to pure Theravada teaching" that contaminate the current Buddhist scene in Sri Lanka. Although his list is much shorter, he cites practices and beliefs treated by Gombrich and Obeyesekere as ingredients of a Buddhism in transformation. He scolds those who "say all religions teach the same thing" when, in fact, the "similarities between Buddhism and other religions . . . are peripheral and superficial," while "the difference is central, deep and fundamental." He berates those who advocate and practice "the new-fangled bodhipuja . . . which is tantamount to taking refuge in a tree, a practice which the Buddha condemned," and he laments that "these days one hardly hears of Buddha-puja." In his observation of the religious scene in Sri Lanka today he sees that "what is flourishing is not Buddhism, but pollution, superstition, and ignorance in the name of Buddhism." Rahula scores those who "venerate and worship Sai Baba," not only "in private houses," but also "in some temples led by Buddhist monks in yellow robes." Sai Baba performs magic "behind a religious garb, in a religious place," and "whether magic or miracle, his demonstrations" according to the Buddha's own "attitude towards magic and miracles" are "improper, unsuitable and unworthy of a religious man." Gombrich and Obeyesekere assess the veneration of Sai Baba as truly ominous, though noting carefully that it is at present only a minor phenomenon in Sri Lanka. They tell us that some Sri Lankan Buddhists venerate this contemporary Indian religious leader as only a guru, that others worship him as a god, and that still others receive him as the boddhisattva incarnation of the coming Maitreya Buddha. "When Sai Baba, both god and guru, is

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identified as a Buddha," theistic devotion, they reckon, has been coopted "into the frame of orthodox soteriology" (p. 455), and that transforms Buddhism.

Even from this brief comparison one can see that the Ven. Rahula regards the beliefs and practices of certain Sri Lankan Buddhists to deviate radically from the received Theravāda tradition. The substance of his evaluation amounts to an insider's affirmation, even if not specifically intended, that Gombrich and Obeyesekere have described a Buddhist reality, not a matter extraneous to Buddhism, that exists in Sri Lanka today. For what amounts to an insider's rejection of *Buddhism Transformed*, one can read Vijitha Rajapakse's review published in the *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, 13.2 (1990): 139–51. For a study of some of the same Sri Lankan Buddhist movements, conducted more recently than that of ***Buddhism Transformed***, it is instructive to read George D. Bond's ***The Buddhist Revival in Sri Lanka*** (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1988). As the word "revival" in his book's title indicates, Bond takes a more sympathetic view of the innovations, emphasizing continuity more than accretion, while Gombrich and Obeyesekere conclude that some of the innovations are rendered acceptable by rationalizing their continuity with what is only an imagined part of the obscured tradition.

ABHINAVAGUPTA ON KĀLIDĀSA AND THE THEATER*

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This major new work goes well beyond its predecessors in exploring the obscurities of "practice" that lie behind the "theories" of ancient Indian dramaturgy. By focusing on a particular problem—one that can be highlighted in the extant dramatic literature—the author is able to attribute a refreshing sense of "order" to the *Nāṭyaśāstra* itself. Abhinavagupta's status as "critic" is also much enhanced by this reevaluation, which also permits a juster appreciation of his role in the theoretical enterprise—a final, and very telling change rung on the "play within the play" motif employed with such skill and to such great effect by our author.

THIS WORK AIMS AT NOTHING less than the rediscovery of the "théâtralité" of the ancient Indian drama—engaging in vivid and representational terms the actual process of staging this long-forgotten art. And not in the dry text-based jargon of the philological academy, but in and through the thought of the greatest of the classical critics, Abhinavagupta, whose interpretations are not just taken as canonical—"something worth deciphering"—but as actually enlightening. Guided by Abhinava, we negotiate, not just the outward technique of the "metteur-en-scène," but the entire mental process of "realization," from poet to actor. Mme. Bansat-Boudon's mastery of Abhinava's difficult and vast commentaries is exemplary. She ranges with authority over the entire *Abhinavabhāratī* (and also the *Locanā*), citing appositely passages little remarked, that both bring the thought of Abhinava into focus, and demonstrate over and over again the comprehensive view he has developed of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* as a theatrical whole—a *mahāvākya*—perfect and complete. The result is stunning. The centuries melt away. The reader feels, at times, the great Kāśmiri's presence at his side in the loges.[1] Never, in my experience, has the genius of this incomparable Indian been better—not just "understood," many have done that—but made vivid, relevant, quick, *sākṣīkṛtaḥ*.

The author's "tilt" toward the *Nāṭyaśāstra* and its eminent commentator is reinforced by adopting even Bharata's "Table of Contents" or *saṃgrahakārikā* (6.10) as an organizing principle of her own work (ch. 2, "Les Regles" [pp. 85–233]).

The work can also be seen, within the traditions of French Indology, as a contemporary reworking of Sylvain Lévi's monumental, and still relevant, *Le Théâtre indien* of 1890,[2] and throughout it seems chiefly to wish to engage that tradition of scholarship—as a counterpoint against which it plays the bright treble of Abhinava. But this twin perspective has its costs—of which two seem worth dwelling on, not with any intention of diminishing the work's value, but better to situate its accomplishments, which may not have been achievable otherwise. By focusing so on Abhinavagupta, the author, at times, falls prey to the essentialist fallacy so decried by our anti-Orientalist friends. There is little sense conveyed here that Indian culture, Indian thought, has a history. The culture of the theater is represented, not only as perfected by Abhinavagupta, but as existing in a timeless continuum that encompasses at least the two millennia from

* This is a review article of: *Poétique du théâtre indien: Lectures du Nāṭyaśāstra*. By LYNE BANSAT-BOUDON. Publications de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient, vol. 169. Paris: ADRIEN MAISONNEUVE, 1992. Pp. 519 + 12 illustrations and 1 foldout table. FF 420.

[1] As sometimes does the author: "... d'autant que [l'exemple offert par Abhinavagupta] permet [au lecteur] d'assister, comme s'il y était lui-même, à ce moment d'une représentation de *Śakuntalā* ..." (p. 291).

[2] Second edition, 1963, with an extensive introduction by Louis Renou updating relevant scholarship. The first edition was, as Mme. Bansat-Boudon points out in correspondence, reviewed by Émile Senart, in *La Revue des deux mondes* (1891). She thus makes explicit, as it were, the intellectual lineage of her present work, which has, serendipitously, just been awarded the Émile Senart prize by the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres.

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REVIEW ARTICLES

ORIGINAL INSIGHTS NEVER FULLY PRESENT: CHAN/ZEN/DECONSTRUCTION*

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Bernard Faure's encyclopedic study of the rhetoric of immediacy and the reality of mediation in the Chan/Zen tradition suffers from lapses and its own rhetorical excesses, but succeeds in conveying the "essential undecidability of Chan," as manifested in deeds and words through the centuries in China and Japan.

LIKE MANY READERS WHO WILL be curious about Bernard Faure's new book, I approach it as a person with a basic knowledge of Chan/Zen Buddhism but not as a scholar of religion; I come to the book also with a specific quest for insights on those who, in literary circles, embraced the aim of Chan, in Faure's words, "to mark the phenomenal world with the seal of the absolute," believing that "in awakening, immanence turns out to be transcendence" (p. 76). That "this equation often came at the expense of transcendental values, and . . . led to legitimating the profane enjoyment of the world of passions" (p. 76) I already knew. One way of understanding this phenomenon is to associate it with changes in the social background of those who participated in Chan through the centuries, notably the Ming merchant classes, who supposedly lost the inner scruples inculcated by the aristocratic mores of Tang and the scholar-official ideals of the Northern Song.[1] But to supplement this kind of historical analysis, Faure's book promises a review of the problem from the inside, using recent strategies for reading texts to analyze the duplicity in the discourse of Chan itself.

The *Rhetoric of Immediacy* heroically attempts to encompass the many centuries of Chan practice and doctrine in three cultures (a Korean voice is heard now and then as we shuttle back and forth between China and Japan). Because of the enormity of the task, a frequently disjointed style of presentation, and a tendency to eliminate the logical or evidential underpinnings to some of the most interesting assertions, the non-specialist is likely to be frustrated on his first pass-through. Nevertheless, there is much here to be learned.

The several types of discourse promised in the prologue—"the hermeneutical and the rhetorical, the structuralist and the historical, the 'theological' and the ideological/cultural"—come into play in the first chapter, "The Differential Tradition." Faure agrees with those who see the division of early Chan into distinct Northern and Southern schools as having been as tactical as it was ideological. He further questions the whole notion of a coherent tradition that can be termed "early Chan." For one thing, the patriarchal tradition envisioned in that notion is logically incompatible with an original Buddhist "path," a stage of the religion in which individuals may become enlightened and thus empower themselves to teach others. At the same time, we need to deconstruct the very notion of that earlier stage as embodying a "pure" Chan principle that is later "corrupted." Not only are there ambiguities and contradictions at every turn: "the 'original' insight . . . may exist only as a [Derridean] 'trace,' something that was never 'present' to a fully awakened consciousness, since there is no self that can actually live the experience" (p. 27). This last clause combines deconstruction and Chan itself to question not only the historical notion of an "originating" teaching, but even the ideological construct of an "originating" experience.

Nowhere is the ambiguity of Chan more apparent than in the dichotomy of sudden and gradual enlightenment, the topic of the second chapter. Faure cautions that this dichotomy is not coterminous with the North-South schism;

* This is a review article of: *The Rhetoric of Immediacy: A Cultural Critique of Chan/Zen Buddhism*. By BERNARD FAURE. Princeton: PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS. 1991. Pp. xiii + 400. $39.50.

[1] See part one of Ge Zhaoguang, *Chanzong yu Zhongguo wenhua* (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin chubanshe, 1991).

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both Northern and Southern schools were "sudden" in seeing enlightenment as imminent and immanent and "gradual" in being unable to do away with mediation, using "skillful means" or mediate stages of preparation to bring the practitioner close to awakening (p. 36). Once again, the intersection of theoretical Chan and deconstruction on the question of language is brought into play to question the reality of the theoretical opposition: "Speaking of the 'sudden' is always gradual; even dismissing subitism and gradualism in the name of a higher, truer 'subitism' is already derivative and therefore gradual."[2] Saying, as Faure does, that any thought in language about enlightenment "can only point to an always-receding horizon or absolute origin," making it "a vanishing point, an ideal origin—but also an ideological construct" (p. 42) brackets (phenomenologically) or denies (deconstructively) that enlightenment has taken place.

A related problem is that "[s]udden awakening cannot be the result of an empirical progress. Even when it is preceded by gradual practice, it is not as an effect [that] is preceded by its causes, for it is one of those states that, in Elster's words, are 'essentially by-products'" (p. 45).

Faure at this point suggests in a footnote two extremely seminal ideas that should have been explored more fully in his text. Jon Elster (reference is to his *Sour Grapes: Studies in the Subversion of Rationality* [Cambridge, 1983]) shows that the very effort required to sustain the practice intended to produce the desired "by-product" state can block that state from occurring; but Chan, according to Faure, "solves the problem by positing that something, at the critical point, is taking over and continues to perform" the practice. Faure neglects to tell us where in Chan texts this solution is proposed and what it is that "takes over." Equally tantalizing is the suggestion that the "technology" of Chan must include a "subtechnology" that obliterates all memory of the traces left by the process. The reader may wonder: if this refers to the fact that any by-product is also "preceded by its causes," why in this case is it necessary that those causes remain unknown? Is it because liberation from the cycle of cause-and-effect must by definition not be an effect of a cause? Is it because the sensation of awakening is a matter of brain chemistry being altered by meditation or other practices, and this is beyond the reach of Chan ideology? (Chan discomfiture with hallucinations experienced during meditation is mentioned on pp. 105–7; it would have been useful to distinguish this more clearly from the Chan rejection of purposeful "occultic use of meditation.") Faure's sentence raises a number of possible interpretations, but we are given no guidance on which to consider.

A point made several times in this chapter is that "the sudden/gradual dichotomy is constantly blurred in the actual practice or discourse of Chan monks" (p. 48). More intriguing is the assertion that Chan never discusses gradualism "although it remains unchallenged in actual practice. The entire Chan tradition seems to hinge on this scapegoat mechanism" (p. 49). Perhaps this silence is the "sub-technology" of erasure mentioned in the footnote four pages earlier?

Before we can ponder that, we are presented with another interesting suggestion: awakening is like death insofar as there is a process that must be undergone before it is "absorbed, ratified by the collectivity" (p. 49). The comparison implies that the function of Chan practice is to affirm publicly an enlightenment that has already taken place. This is to put Zongmi's "sudden awakening followed by gradual practice" (p. 42; perhaps familiar enough not to require citation of a source, for none is given) into a potentially useful anthropological frame: a person is "awakened" at some point in life but does not experience it as such until the community recognizes it. Or perhaps Faure means to allude to the Chan teaching that we are originally enlightened. Either way, if we reflect that death is like "the 'original' insight . . . [that] may exist only as a 'trace,' something that was never 'present' to a fully awakened consciousness, since there is no self that can actually live the experience," as discussed above, the parallel would be truly fascinating. That is, neither death nor total awakening can be "lived," yet there are times when their traces must be acknowledged in life. Is this the parallel between funerals and gradual cultivation in Chan that Faure wants to draw?

Chapter three, "The Twofold Truth of Immediacy," treats the problematic doctrine that "passions are awakening," to which I alluded at the beginning as relevant to a great deal of Chinese literature, both lyrical and anecdotal.

Unfortunately, this chapter is rather intimidating in the early pages: on pp. 56–57, in two paragraphs, I count at least fourteen ways of approaching the issues raised by the "Two Truths" paradigm. The idea that having a

[2] Musicians who know the word "subito" may be able to deduce the meaning of "subitism." Psychologists who know the new verb "subitize," designating a subject's instant apprehension of quantity without counting constituent units, are perhaps better prepared to comprehend "subitism." Most other Anglophone readers will extrapolate from context; if they recall the mention on p. 33 of "Demiéville's translation of the term *dun* as 'subit' (sudden)" and search the *OED* for English words derived form this Latin root, they will find only obsolete or rare words often connoting careless haste.

distinction between expedient and absolute truths preserves the latter as a constant to prevent changes and contradictions in conventional truths from bringing down the whole enterprise is easy enough to grasp; the idea that any doctrine that negates duality is simultaneously acknowledging duality, and the psychologically realistic observation that we constantly travel between logically incompatible systems in everyday life are also readily understood. But Faure also addresses in rapid fire a series of comparisons between East and West and between Buddhism and Hinduism proposed by scholars and often contradicting each other. He should have reassured his readers that this bewildering mix would be revisited at greater length in subsequent pages. Brief asides to the initiates provide further intimidation or annoyance, depending on your state of mind: remember, if you will, that "Derrida has pointed out the ideological effects of the attempts to pass immediately beyond oppositions (Derrida 1972b: 56)." Period. If you don't already know what "the ideological effects" are, you'd better look it up.

There are some things you can look up only with great effort. One *locus classicus* of the idea that "the passions are awakening" could be, we are told on p. 60, "Linji's advocacy of the 'true man without affairs.'" This caught my eye because "without affairs" looks like (we are not given the Chinese) a translation of *wushi*, a phrase used in 1079 by Su Shi as an epithet for his drinking—the drinking one does when there is no business to take care of. I think Su's phrase constitutes an allusion to a story in the *Shiji* that has nothing to do with Chan, but it would have been nice to see where Linji (presumably Linji Yixuan, although the index entry for him does not cite this page) uses the phrase translated; then one could verify the wording of the original, figure out if it illuminates Su Shi's poems—and then try to puzzle out how it relates to Faure's discussion of "innate enlightenment," since the connection is far from self-evident.

It is in this chapter that a problem recently much discussed comes up: the presence or absence of a dualistic world-view in China. This has implications for literary metaphor as well as the functioning of Buddhist symbols imported from India (a culture that presumably lies in the dualistic Western sphere). Faure questions the nonduality of Chinese thought. He points to the presence of mediative symbols in popular religion and to the hostility expressed toward the body in Chan/Zen, which seems to indicate a mind-body split (even though such a split would contradict professed doctrine). I am willing to agree that the East-West dichotomy is fuzzier than some have argued, especially since neither sphere is so monolithic as to exclude incompatible cosmologies; yet I do not think Faure has seriously considered whether mediative devices necessarily imply different levels of reality. If we say that a dream (or recollecting a dream) mediates between sleep and wakefulness, can we say that sleep and wakefulness are therefore universally experienced as two distinct states? Is it not possible that to some people the phenomenon of dreaming demonstrates the self-evident "fact" that sleep and wakefulness are simply two phases of a single experience, and that neither is more "real" that the other? Further: does dualism have any meaning when you declare both mind and matter unreal? The statement that "the return to unity as it is extolled implies a previous departure, or even irremediably produces it" (p. 77) is problematic. It seems logical, but do the unity and the alleged departure from it have the same meaning as they have in the West? Nondualism is not to be written off so easily.

It also worries me that Faure slips increasingly across the sea to Japan and Zen aesthetics for examples of "secondary nature" (p. 78) to bolster his argument. He clearly thinks that the Japanese and Chinese world-views were enough alike to allow him to assert that symbols in Chan and Zen have the same significance, so much so that Japanese variations on and additions to continental cultural imports can be said to speak for Chinese Chan. To be sure, at some level we must recognize that Chan/Zen is a powerful international ideology; but when something so subtle as the presence or absence of a dualistic world-view is at issue, I would welcome evidence that the vast linguistic and cultural differences between China and Japan have been controlled in Faure's argument.

"Chan/Zen and Popular Religions," the fourth chapter, first devotes several pages to assessing various models of the relationship between popular and hegemonic or dominant cultures (the distinction between the latter two is deemed significant but never explained; it apparently has something to do with the obvious fact that levels of culture, because they overlap imperfectly with social classes or interest groups, are internally divided; see p. 86). Faure's (mercifully) unelaborated reference to "new relationships of power within academia," associated with the increased attention being paid to popular religion (p. 81), may explain his need to record brief positions on so many schema in so few pages.

Even when we focus on East Asia, methodological considerations continue to dominate, and the absence of historical data easily leads to obscurity. When Faure proposes, on the one hand, that there is both "a popular and an elitist 'anarchism'" and, on the other, that "what may strike us at first as subversive, both in Chan and in popular religion, may actually turn out to be reinforcing the institutional structure" (p. 91), it sounds insightful. But in the absence of examples, the point is blurred.

"Institutional structure" is not even defined; as used here, it probably refers to social and governmental institutions, but the subsequent sentences suggest instead reference to the structure of the religious institution: "popular religion might provide the necessary freedom and alterity that allow institutional power to assert itself. . . . Chan and other institutional religions may need the resistance and subversion of popular religion in order to survive" (p. 91). Perhaps Faure means that Chan is an "institutional religion" in the sense of being endorsed by the state; indeed, seventy pages earlier he has mentioned that Chan's "relationship" with the state is "well documented . . . from the eighth century onward." But the nature of that "relationship" is not detailed in this book. Therefore, when Faure, in the last sentence in this chapter, explicitly places Chan and "official" religion in opposition, we conclude that it would be a mistake to equate "institutional" and "official." It is entirely possible to define an "institutional" religion as one possessing hierarchies of authority, enjoying temporal continuity, and expecting a reliable stream of income from supporters; but then Chan and most "popular" religions, which Faure also places in opposition, are equally "institutional." Without actual historical examples of the various relationships between Chan and the state and Chan and other religions, we cannot sort out Faure's distinctions because we don't know what his words mean.

Similarly, it is extremely interesting when he says that Chan/Zen incorporates thaumaturgy and the manipulation of relics to garner popular support; but he also states that its survival and power depend on struggling against the "subversion" and "alterity" of popular religion. Both statements may be true, but in order to make sense of the argument we must be told just when Chan's very survival or assertion of power (which? and against what forces?) depended on adopting and/or overcoming (simultaneously or in different phases of the process?) the "subversion" and "alterity" of popular religion.

Unless one knows to what historical data such sentences apply, they lack referential meaning (signs in search of signification, if you will). Such is the case with the assertion that "archaic religion claimed a perfect adherence to a preexisting superhuman order" (p. 92). Most of us know a little about Shang divination directed to royal ancestors, but Faure's words could be applied to that only with considerable elaboration. Without knowing what he identifies as "archaic religion," we have no way of judging the truth value of his utterance.

I cannot leave this chapter without quoting its wonderful final sentence—wonderful for the way in which alternatives, separated by dashes and no less than five little "or," are tossed one by one like so many juggler's pins at the hapless reader, until they all come crashing to the floor: "Suffice it to say that for the time being, rather than an opposition—even if dialectical—or a fusion between Chan and local or popular religion, or between Chan and official religion, we can observe an intertwining of—or a transferential relationship among—antagonistic or analogous segments of each of these religious traditions" (p. 95). It is fortunate that this sentence's position at the end of the chapter allows one to ruminate on it and then take a breather. It begins to have the look and feel of a masterful summation. But to really understand the elegant distinction between "fusion" on the one hand and both "intertwining" and its alternative, a "transferential relationship," on the other, does one not need a concrete historical detail or two? As metaphorical vehicles (borrowed perhaps from botany), these terms possess a certain power, a definite structural relationship, but without tenors they finally contribute nothing to Faure's story.

With chapters five and six, "The Thaumaturge and Its Avatars," parts I and II, we begin to encounter fascinating historical material. There are minor annoya..ces, to be sure. A rapid survey of the trickster in ancient China on pp. 115–16, including mention of "Jieyu, the madman of Zhu," (sic!) takes us up to three poorly linked but very suggestive lines of inquiry from Norman Girardot's *Myth and Meaning in Early Taoism*,[3] but just when one is sitting up and expecting someone to put it all together, Faure drops the subject and shifts abruptly back to Chan. Another frustration: on page 120, the "story of Puhua's death" is mentioned as "clearly patterned on the Daoist Immortal's 'deliverance from the corpse,'" and again on page 185 in connection with predicting one's own death; but since we are never told the relevant version of the story of Puhua's death, its usefulness in bolstering Faure's points is lost.

At the bottom of page 123, Faure asks a crucial question: "If folly has become a literary pose or a commodity, to what extent is it still really subversive? Or to what extent were the Chan trickster figures domesticated or emasculated?" Then, "[i]nsofar as nature or naturalness has been co-opted by the ruling class, true nature can no longer express itself through the paradigm of spontaneity." The term "ruling classes" has appeared out of nowhere and is meaningless without context. Maddeningly, we don't know what century we are in, or even which country: since the following sentence tells us that Puhua, the outsider in Tang China, was the inspiration for the Fuke school in thirteenth-century Japan, one guesses in desperation that the founding of the school represents

[3] Berkeley and Los Angeles: Univ. of California Press, 1983.

the institutionalization of spontaneity and that the "co-opters" must be Japanese. (But a footnote here mentions that Puhua himself was believed to have been an army officer. Does that make him a member of the Tang "ruling class?" Surely not. Does Faure mean to imply this was a fabrication for the benefit of the military rulers of Japan? In a hurry to get out of his footnote and into a discussion of "negativity" and "reversal of symbols," he deserts us.)

Faure cautions us that he intends to outline the role of the thaumaturgic elements in the acculturation of Chan "only in a heuristic fashion, in order to reveal the structural logic of those developments rather than their historical occurrence" (p. 100). Yet a temporal framework is apparently essential to these two chapters, and properly so, since "acculturation" takes place over time and only in historical context. Broad historical generalizations such as the following are offered and do help us understand the "structural logic": "Thus for several centuries, Chan chose the trickster over the thaumaturge" as a "strategy . . . for domesticating the occult" by making it this-worldly (p. 115).[4]

The big picture aside, Faure often teases us with hints of a more detailed accounting of Chan's relationship with external factors waiting to be written, especially regarding developments in the eighth and ninth centuries. Context suggests that he thinks it was in the eighth century that the denunciation of thaumaturgic "powers by Chan masters appears to have been essentially a discursive strategy, a political move at a time when Tantrism and Daoism were in favor at the court" (p. 109). It is less clear when it was that "carnivalization," as realized in Hanshan and Shide, was "certainly not what the Chan tradition, trying at the time to establish its authority, needed" (p. 117). Because Hanshan's "[t]raditional dates range from the end of the sixth to the middle of the ninth century, the most common view being that he lived during the early T'ang period," and it is only "recent scholarship" that "has tended to put him in the late eighth or early ninth century"; and because some poems attributed to Shide could be as late as the Song,[5] Faure's phrase "at that time" could refer to any period between the late sixth and the eleventh centuries. Nowhere in the book does he tell us when the two figures were created (one hopes he does not consider them historical) as "carnivalizers" both to support and embarrass Chan.

Faure implicitly associates Puhua's domestication of the thaumaturgic tradition[6] with "the time when Han Yu criticized the emperor for worshipping the Buddha's relic" (p. 121) and states that it is significant that in the same period Layman Pang and others worked to make Chan "the religion of 'everyday life'" (p. 124). The relationship Faure implies between Han Yu and these trends in Chan would be a most interesting topic to explore at greater length. A later historical topic, one within Chan itself, is the Song advocacy of "the superiority of the formless" and the crazy monk ideal as an inversion of the contemporary "formalization and ritualization of Chan practice" (p. 124). And most tantalizing is this suggestive comment dropped in at the very end of chapter six with no elaboration: "the trickster . . . ideal can be seen as . . . an attempt to accommodate Chan ideology to the social changes that marked the Tang/Song transition." Only much later, on page 314, does Faure hint that the social changes he has in mind for that hundred or so years have to do with "imperial centralization under the Tang and the monetarization of the economy during the Sung," which he associates with the increasing role of "mediation." More work is needed to develop and support this notion (especially since "centralization under the Tang" is cruelly oxymoronic for mid- and late-Tang).

Chapters seven and eight, "Metamorphoses of the Double, I: Relics" and "II: 'Sublime Corpses' and Icons," challenge us to look even further beyond the familiar ideology of "wordless transmission" to the enshrined detritus of the transmitters. "Relics" include both crystalline fragments left after the cremation of a master's body and all other remains or articles associated with his person—even his writings. It is startling to learn that Qisong, the Song figure who labored to establish the translatability of Buddhism into Confucianism, ultimately found Buddhism superior because of relics (p. 139; mere thaumaturgy

[4] The subsequent rise of the thaumaturge implied here is contradicted on p., 117: "the Chan tradition eventually chose the trickster against the thaumaturge." I suppose Chan could choose the trickster for several centuries, allow the thaumaturges to have their way for a while, and then eventually return to the trickster; but both the sequence of chapters five and six and much of Faure's discussion point to a unidirectional movement away from the relative prominence given earlier to the magical powers of Chan masters and toward the relative dominance of the trickster image.

[5] E. G. Pulleyblank, "Linguistic Evidence of the Date of Hanshan," in *Studies in Chinese Poetry and Poetics*, vol. 1, ed. Miao (San Francisco: Chinese Materials Center, Inc., 1978), 163 and 175.

[6] If Puhua was an officer in 755—see p. 124, n. 13—he must have died before the affair of the Buddha bone in 819 and should not be directly associated with "mid-Tang Chan." But his acts presumably helped shape ninth-century developments.

was not unique to Buddhism and should be discounted; see n. 27).

Chapter eight's material on mummified monks was interesting to me as someone who encounters these "icons" from time to time in poetry, whether as background (e.g., Su Shi's poem at the pagoda of Sengqie in Sizhou[2]) or as occasion (e.g., Yu Ji's poem for the temple that enshrined the lacquered corpse of the Tang Chan Master Purun[3]).

One of the most crucial points in this chapter is the status of highly realistic sculptures (especially in Japan) as "substitute bodies . . . pointing to no reality beyond themselves" (p. 170). Despite similar claims Faure makes regarding the patriarch's robe as the embodiment of the dharma (p. 166), the mortuary portrait as a double (p. 175), and even the patriarch as an icon, a double, of the Buddha (p. 178), I feel these assertions are never adequately substantiated. The manner in which the arhat Pindola is "consecrated" as the image of the Buddha by King Aśoka may be important evidence for the presence of the sacred in the immediate object of devotion, but this story is relegated to a footnote (p. 177, n. 59) and comes from a different culture. Faure himself lets slip that "Chan discourse . . . fluctuated between metaphor and metonymy, transcendence and immanence" (p. 170), and I suspect that the status of mummies and sculptures is similarly difficult to pin down.

Chapter nine, "The Ritualization of Death," centers on the contradiction between the funerary ritualism that became increasingly important in Zen from the fourteenth century on and Chan/Zen subitism and traditional attitudes toward death (p. 179). Several interesting phenomena are introduced, most notably the obligations of a Chan master to foretell the time of his death, to compose death verses, and to die in the meditation posture. Faure makes the valuable observation that death verses soon became formulaic, at least by the thirteenth century in Japan. But he ends his discussion of the topic by asserting that the "departing verse was not simply intended to testify to the master's enlightenment; it was *producing* it and contained, in the litteral [sic] sense, its 'essence.'" Let us note first that a verbal artifact "contains" something only metaphorically, since it has no spatial dimension; to refer to the verb's literal sense is to remind us perversely that it is not being used literally. But the substantive question here is this: on what basis does Faure make these statements? He has just cited evidence that in 1295 the death verse was "severely criticized for having become a mere show." One could understand how it might nevertheless "testify" politically and ideologically to the master's enlightenment, but to go beyond that and say that it "produces" and contains the essence of his enlightenment is to make extravagant if ill-defined claims for the verse that I suspect no one in 1295, including the masters who had to write the verses, would have accepted.

The remainder of the chapter considers the various and contradictory functions of funerals: to accelerate the transition to death and to purify, on the one hand, and, on the other, to prolong the memory and significance of the deceased and to establish continuities. Most of what is said could apply to the majority of cultures in which burial or cremation is practiced; perhaps a separate monograph is needed to show how Zen funerals compare with other funerary customs. A number of figures—"Schema of the cremation ground" (p. 196); "The Four Gates and funerary circumambulation" (p. 199); "Symbolism of the *Svastika* in Sōtō Zen" (p. 200); and "Symbolism of postmortem ordination" (p. 203)—appear in this chapter but are referred to only obliquely or not at all in the text. Unsupported by explication, most of them are meaningless. This suggests that the chapter was put together in haste and edited in the same manner.

Careless editing may also be the culprit in the apparently random placement of note 30 (and note 32 in chapter ten) and also in the use of Japanese pronunciations for terms from a Chinese text (p. 193; cf. the mixed use of Sanskrit and Japanese terms—no Chinese terms—in association with Chinese practices and texts, p. 293, n. 14).

Chapter ten, "Dream Within a Dream," begins in a refreshingly straightforward manner: "Relics and icons reintroduced presence and mediation in a world emptied by the Buddhist philosophy of emptiness and selflessness. Another aspect of the Buddhist 'metaphysics of presence,' and a crucial mode of mediation, is provided by the intermediary world of dreams" (p. 209). But dreams are a complex topic. Rather late in the chapter, Faure introduces a distinction between the hermeneutical and performative models of dreams: the former deals with dream interpretation; the latter recognizes that a dream may be "transformative" and also modify "social structures." This distinction could have been used profitably as a framework to give the chapter more shape, since Faure covers both Buddhist theories on the question of the reality of dreams (which of course entails the unreality of "reality") and the ways in which dreams are agents of deepening understanding or legitimization.

[2] Translated by Ronald Egan, *Word, Image, and Deed in the Life of Su Shi* (Cambridge: Harvard-Yenching Institute, 1994), 179–80.

[3] Translated by Jonathan Chaves, *Columbia Book of Later Chinese Poetry* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1986), 41–42.

Twice in this chapter Faure makes a puzzling choice not to see in cited texts what I would guess to be the doctrine that there is no self and therefore no dreamer. On p. 216, where the *Damolun* states that when one awakens according to the Dharma there is nothing "[worth calling] awakening," I would suggest that Faure has distorted the meaning by adding the words in brackets. On p. 219, where Dahui asks, "Who is dreaming?" I think the implied answer is, "No one." "Yogācāra idealism, which maintains that everything is a dream, and only the dreamer is real" (p. 220) is surely irrelevant, if not incompatible. Since Faure has stated that there is no self to experience enlightenment (p. 27) and later states that there is "no 'subject' to suffer from" the passions (p. 234), I would ask why dreams are not an analogous case.

Chapter eleven is a "Digression: The Limits of Transgression." It covers the problem of the affirmation of desire raised at the beginning of this review, and the problem of women as a threat to the enlightenment of men. Tales of both heterosexual and homosexual transgressions in monastic communities are recounted, but in the end the reader does not feel that he shall ever know much about how the issue of sexuality was resolved at any particular moment. Criticism of moral laxity almost always comes from outside the community, especially from those who have a stake in exaggerating the transgressions—not only Jesuits but also writers of fiction in Ming China and Tokugawa Japan. Valid surveys on sexual practices are difficult enough to carry out in our own time; they will never be done retrospectively for previous centuries. Moreover, "[u]nlike in Christianity, sexuality never really became in Chan/Zen the object of an elaborate discourse, despite a relatively similar process of individuation, studied in the Western case by Foucault" (p. 257). Even if Faure were to expand on his concept of "individuation" (I take his reference to the Chan master as the "paradigmatic individual" on p. 191 to be a tongue-in-cheek oxymoron) then, we shall never understand a discourse on sexuality that did not take place.

"The Return of the Gods," chapter twelve, concerns mainly the place of the arhat in Chan/Zen and *kami* in Zen. A number of explanations are offered for different cases: local gods are replaced by the holy man, who borrows some of their iconography (p. 265); outlawed desires are covertly expressed in the attachment of Hindu themes to Buddhist figures (p. 265); arhats were somewhat more controllable than Daoist immortals and at the same time "offered a kind of transcendence and personal relationship that popular gods" did not (p. 266); gods in Zen "demythologize" themselves by accepting abstract, philosophical definitions (p. 280); and ritualization accomplishes a similar weakening of the gods' individuality (p. 283; note that Chan/Zen monks themselves become god-like powers that must be tamed through ritual, pp. 281–82).

The final chapter, "Ritual Antiritualism," puts aside Chan's antiritualism to explore the "surplus of meaning" in the rituals that became so much a part of Chan. There are many seminal ideas here. On p. 296, four suggestive ways of looking at meditation as ritual are juxtaposed in one rich paragraph: Chan meditation may be a kind of "depossession" that prepares one for possession by an "other"; despite that, it is also comparable to possession or to the trance; sitting in meditation ritually reenacts the awakening of the Buddha (on p. 299, Faure will state that awakening itself is a ritual reenactment of it); therefore, it iconizes the "death" that transcends time and death. These points deserve greater elaboration; one could also argue that "possession" is undesirable in the absence of a trustworthy God with whom one hopes to be united.

Another valuable observation is that "the failure of . . . ritual is actually its success, the creation of a discrepancy between the ideal and the real (without which both would cease to exist) and the making guilty of individuals who fall short of the ideal" (p. 299). Total sacralization of life would be the end of life.

In his "Epilogue," a dense and powerful essay that brings together all the themes of the book, Faure stresses that the dichotomies he has explored are not found only between Chan and other traditions (Buddhist and "popular") but within Chan itself. He argues that the two levels of truth or discourse laid out in the preceding pages in all their aspects supplement each other, each maintaining itself precisely "because of their tensions" (p. 318). Thus, for example, Chan attempted to limit and purify to "save the ontological reality" but the very "privatization/secularization" that accompanied this attempt made ritual, icons, and elaborations necessary in order to sustain the tradition.

It remains to mention errors that may be confusing for some readers. There is a tendency for Faure to substitute "z" for "s" in pinyin romanizations: "*sansheng*" becomes "*zansheng*" (pp. 122 and 329); "*Huo jushi*" ("incinerating laymen") is written *huojuzhi* on p. 203. Also "*divi*" and "*dier*" ("first order" and "second order") are written with "*da*" instead of "*di*" (p. 18).

Names and dates sometimes suffer strange fates. Yelü Chucai's name is miswritten Yelu Chuzai (p. 27); because his name does not appear in the character glossary and Faure misidentifies him as a monk, the reader may think "Yelu Chuzai" is someone else, not the famous Yuan official and lay Buddhist. Dadian Bastong (p. 146), is an error for Dadian Baotong. The character glossary includes only "Dadian," forcing the curious reader to

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and a good dictionary for the second name. Pozao Duo is clearly not "Po the Stove-breaker" (p. 260) but "Duo the Stove-breaker." Dates for people are sometimes given more than once, which I found helpful. But sometimes dates are withheld until late in the book or appear on pages not cited in the index. Dahui Zonggao first appears on p. 41, but his dates are given on pp. 188 and 219. Sengzhe's death date can be inferred on p. 153 and is stated on p. 158; but his full dates are given only on p. 265. The index entry for Sengqie does not cite that page (nor are mentions of him on pp. 118 and 150 cited). Wanhui (whose name becomes "Maihui" in the character glossary through a transposition of radicals) is said on p. 265 (not indexed) to have died in 711—but we were told on p. 150 that he was buried in 709. Another macabre confusion is found in n. 14, p. 156: the last example of a mummy being produced in China is "recorded in Taiwan in 1976. See Welch 1967." Holmes Welch's *The Practice of Chinese Buddhism* reports only the 1959 exhumation of a mummy in Taiwan (p. 344); no predictions about future mummies are made. I suspect that Faure is keeping his reference for the 1976 mummy to himself; "See Welch 1967" means "See Welch 1967 for other information on mummies."

If "On the Leaves" seems an impossible translation for Jōyō (p. 277), your instincts are correct: the correct name is Yōjō. The name is also backwards in the character glossary.

The date 625 on p. 166 should be 1625. One of two page citations on p. 243 is clearly wrong: p. 433b cannot follow p. 455a in the source text.

It is unfortunate that poor editing, not only for these minor details but also for style and organization, detracts from this study, for Faure brings enormous erudition and creativity to play here. Yet in the end, despite all the frustrations I have expressed above, I come away with the sense that the complexity and richness of this book reflect more than the bafflements of deconstruction: they reflect the reality of Chan/Zen itself, in all its oppositions (dialectical or otherwise), fusions, intertwinings, and transferential relationships within itself and between it and antagonistic or analogous religious traditions. Faure's is an essential study.

ARE THERE TANNAITIC PARALLELS TO THE GOSPELS?*

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Jacob Neusner's *Are There Really Tannaitic Parallels to the Gospels?* pretends to be a scholarly refutation of Morton Smith's *Tannaitic Parallels to the Gospels* (1951), but is in reality abusive polemic. It is Neusner's obituary for Smith, bringing closure to an intense but troubled relationship. Because of its careless scholarship and vindictive tone, the book should not have been published without major editing, and, by publishing it in this form, Scholars Press has served as the author's vanity press.

THIS BOOK IS A DISGRACE to its author and a disgrace to its publisher. The scholarship is shoddy, the writing repetitious, the tone vituperative, and the argumentation flawed. "Do not think these harsh judgments exaggerated or abusive. They are well merited and well founded" (p. 2).[1]

The ostensible point of this book (hereafter, *Refutation*), as indicated by the title, is that Morton Smith's Ph.D. dissertation, completed at the Hebrew University in 1945, defended in 1948, and published in 1951 as *Tannaitic Parallels to the Gospels*,[2] was bungled: that it was "... a dissertation of ... surpassingly commonplace triviality, offering ... exceptionally ineffable platitudes" (p. 38). "Smith introduced questions he did not answer, took for granted facts that were not facts, confused his categories in a memorable display of conceptual bungling, and proved everything and its opposite in a mess of contradiction and confusion" (p. 39). This rhetoric notwithstanding, *Refutation* bills itself as "a civil, academic reply to [Smith's] ideas" (p. 39).

In fact, the book is meant to be a refutation, not just of Smith's doctoral dissertation, but of Smith's entire life and career. The failure of the dissertation, Neusner argues, presages a career that was "tragic" and "fruitless" (p. 157), not to mention "sad and arid" (p. xiii). Smith was "a clever man—not brilliant, in conceptual matters a complete bungler, but clever" (p. 19), "clever but not very smart" (pp. 21, 31), a "second rate mind" (p. 34), "a rather ordinary, and in fact, quite limited, mind" (p. 31), "not very smart" (p. 14), "not a very painstaking or patient scholar, hasty in drawing conclusions and sloppy in presenting them, superficial" (p. 157), "a bungler at problems of a philosophical character" (p. 12, cf. p. 31), "ignorant and incompetent" (p. 38). "In his last years he was generally regarded as a crank, and, by the end, little short of a crackpot. He died a figure of ridicule, lacking influence outside of his own personal sect" (p. 25). "Smith knew two terms of supreme abuse: know-nothing and fundamentalist. He knew whereof he cursed, for he himself was both" (p. 25). *Refutation* is filled with such *ad hominem* judgments.

Why such vituperation? Early in his career Neusner and Smith were very close. In the autobiographical introduction (pp. 6–9 and 15–25, annoyingly repetitive) Neusner explains that Smith was "the first, the only, and the last authentic teacher I ever had" (p. 7, cf. p. x). "For an important chapter in my scholarly career, from 1959–1973, I was Smith's student and disciple" (p. 17). But suddenly

* This is a review article of: *Are There Really Tannaitic Parallels to the Gospels? A Refutation of Morton Smith*. By JACOB NEUSNER. South Florida Studies in the History of Judaism. Atlanta: SCHOLARS PRESS, 1993. Pp. xiii + 186. $59.95. I am grateful to my research assistant, Mr. Mitchell Verter, for his help.

[1] In order that my own motivations in writing this review should be as transparent as possible, I offer the following autobiographical information. Morton Smith was my *Doktorvater* at Columbia University. After I received my Ph.D. in 1975, we remained on good terms. He read and commented on much of my work before publication, and I was honored to return the favor. He appointed me his literary executor, and I am now compiling two volumes of his collected articles for publication. In 1991, the year of Smith's death, I succeeded Jacob Neusner as Ungerleider Professor of Judaic Studies at Brown University and as editor of *Brown Judaic Studies*. Appendix two of the book under review is entitled "Smith's Legacy of Selective Fundamentalism in the Writing of S. J. D. Cohen" (pp. 167–77; cf. pp. 12–13, 27). Neusner there criticizes one of my articles, but the criticism is inconsequential. My sole objective in this review is to defend Morton Smith and his scholarship from the unjustified post-mortem attacks of Jacob Neusner.

[2] Journal of Biblical Literature Monograph Series, vol. 6 (Philadelphia: Society of Biblical Literature, 1951).

P. 102: *tawāshi* here is not a military rank, but merely "eunuch." Any doubt as to the identity of the amir in question should be cleared up by his name, Ṣandal, one often carried by eunuchs.[19]

P. 113: Nābulus is not in the Jordan Valley, but rather in the hilly region north of Jerusalem in the West Bank. It is misleading to suggest that al-Nāṣir Yūsuf preferred the Mongols to Qutuz, but rather, he was afraid of both, and was caught in the desert of Transjordan, trying to flee from the latter.

P. 120: The pro-Mongol sources give completely different information as to the identity of the Mongol commanders at the battle of Homs in 1260.[20]

P. 137: *ajnād* are not foot-troops; rather this is a general appellation for mounted non-Mamluk troops, as in *ajnād al-ḥalqa*.

P. 161: On the basis of evidence taken from Baybars al-Manṣūrī's *Zubda*, it is stated that Baybars' first letter to Berke was in 659/1260–61. P. Jackson,[21] however, has shown that this historian is wrong, and his source—Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir, who writes 660/1261–62—is to be preferred.

P. 164: *iqāmat al-ḥudūd* does not mean here "die Bewahrung der Grenzen," but refers to a religious matter (as the rest of the sentence), and should be translated as "maintaining the bounds [which God has placed on man's freedom of action]."

P. 170: It is unclear why Fāris al-Dīn Aqqush al-Nasrūdī is referred to as the "Atābak." He was certainly an officer of only middling rank and thus the attachment of this title to him is strange, and there is no evidence that he carried it. Has he been confused with the Atābak Īrās al-Dīn Aqtai al-Mustaʿrib?

P. 187 and n. 36: Heidemann sees al-Ashraf Khalīl's plans to conquer Baghdad and Iraq as mere propaganda; his real goal was to secure the Euphrates border, and to conquer northern Syria. Actually, we will never know his real plans, since he was murdered in 1293 before an attempt could be made to realize them. However, given al-Ashraf's performance at Acre and Qalʿat al-Rūm, there is *a priori* no reason not to take him at his word.

Pp. 243–44, 285: The expression *wa-bi-saʿādatihi* on the dirhams of Damascus and Hamah struck in 658 is worthy of further comment. It refers to the heaven-given luck which the Mongol ruler (here Möngke) enjoys, equivalent to the *iqbāl* found in other coins. Both are used to translate the Mongolian *suu*.[22]

Pp. 292: The expression *bi-qūwati'llāh taʿālā wa-bi-iqbāl munkkā qā'ān* . . . ("by the power of God most high and by the good fortune of Möngke Qa'an") found on the dirham minted at Ḥarrān in 659/1260–61 is a free adaptation of the Mongolian phrase which begins many letters and orders, giving further expression to the Mongol imperial ideology. A Persian equivalent appears on dirhams struck in Tabriz in the 1250s.[23]

Pp. 301–2, 317: M-N-K-U, should be vocalized as Mankū < Mengü, the Turkish form of Möngke, and not as Mungū. Why some coins carry the Turkish and not the Mongolian form of this name remains an open question.

P. 335: In his discussion of the foundation of the il-khanate, Heidemann relies heavily on the recent work of D. Krawulsky,[24] who attributes crucial importance to the Mamluk victory at ʿAyn Jālūt as well as Möngke's death in enabling Hülegü to establish his state. Other, no less important, developments were the civil war between Qubilai and Ariy Böke and the general confusion in the empire following Möngke's demise.[25] It is worthy of mention, however, that the title *Ilkhān*, which may reflect this growing independence, appears to have been in some use in 1259 if not before, previous to ʿAyn Jālūt.[26]

[19] D. Ayalon, "The Eunuchs in the Mamlūk Sultanate," in *Studies in Memory of Gaston Wiet*, ed. M. Rosen-Ayalon (Jerusalem, 1977), 267–75.

[20] J. A. Boyle, "The Dynastic and Political History of the Il-Khāns," in *Cambridge History of Iran*, ed. J. A. Boyle (Cambridge, 1968), 5:352.

[21] "The Dissolution of the Mongol Empire," *CAJ* 22 (1977–78): 237, n. 231.

[22] See R. Amitai-Preiss, "An Exchange of Letters in Arabic between Abaya Ilkhān and Sultan Baybars (A.H. 667/A.D. 1268–69)," *CAJ* 38 (1994): 16, n. 20.

[23] Ibid., 22–23. Heidemann (pp. 87, 336) touches upon this matter, and mentions a Turkish version of this phrase from A.D. 1246.

[24] *Mongolen und Ilkhane. Ideologie und Geschichte* (Beirut, 1989).

[25] See P. Jackson, "The Dissolution of the Mongol Empire," 220–22; D. Morgan, *The Mongols* (Oxford, 1986), 148–49.

[26] R. Amitai-Preiss, "Evidence for the Early Use of the Title *ilkhān* among the Mongols," *JRAS*, 3rd ser., 1 (1991): 353–61.

ON THE EXPERIENCE OF AWAKENING: TWO REVIEWS*

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Two very different approaches to understanding the Buddhist goal of "awakening" are analyzed and contrasted—Paul Griffiths' recent study based on a logic of the proposition and Ilkka Pyysiäinen's more context-sensitive phenomenological account. Though the former seems to this author to raise more questions than it answers, the reading of both works together constitutes a rapid and often brutal introduction to the complex of issues surrounding "awakening." In deference to Griffiths' somewhat neological usage, this review will continue his practice of distinguishing "buddhalogy"—a theory concerning the nature and person of the Buddha—from "buddhology," the academic study of Buddhism in its various aspects.

AS ONE WOULD EXPECT, Griffiths' book is controversial. The author, a highly skilled and competent Sanskritist, sets out to explicate the "buddhalogical" doctrine set forth in the classical scholarly digests in terms of its doctrinal import, and not in the reductive terms of any concomitant, nondoctrinal phenomena. He offers a formal analysis of doctrine as doctrine, based on the claim that the basic intuition that drives the buddhalogical discourse was to limn the maximal greatness of the Buddha. In so doing, he argues, the digests portray a Buddha totally removed from any identifiable qualities of change, indeed from anything identifiable at all, so that to be Buddha is not to be anything at all. For Buddha has no ordinary mental states or properties. The end result is a monism in which Buddha swallows up everything, including even Dharma and Saṅgha. Griffiths argues his case carefully, grounding it in the texts examined. Herein lies its controversial nature, for he concludes that the classical buddhalogy of the digests is at odds with other basic Buddhist doctrines, such as the impermanence and the unsatisfactoriness (*duḥkhatā*) of human life, that are so basic to the historical presentations of the Dharma. This book is recommended precisely because it raises such controversial claims about Buddhist doctrine based on a close formal analysis of the textual sources.

Griffiths' argument calls for more than a cursory review, for it raises a number of other important issues, issues about method, the context of the texts, the treatment of texts as digests, the selection of examined texts, the selection of examined doctrines, and the criterion of maximal greatness that it claims underlies buddhalogy.

First, method. The author presents a properly doctrinal study of doctrine, by which he means doctrine as such, not in terms of other, nonformal phenomena, whether social, political, institutional, or financial (all considered to be epiphenomena of the text), nor in terms of the concrete historical context of the texts treated.[1] As claimed, Griffiths' method is indeed corrective, for reductionist readings of texts, such as Foucault's, in demonstrating that it is the underlying agenda of religious discourse to exercise power and further class interests, do tend, single-mindedly, to neglect doctrinal import.

* This is a review article of: *On Being Buddha: The Classical Doctrine of Buddhahood*. By PAUL J. GRIFFITHS. SUNY Series: Toward a Comparative Philosophy of Religions. Albany: STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK PRESS, 1994. Pp. xxii + 261. $19.95.

Beyond Language and Reason: Mysticism in Indian Buddhism. By ILKKA PYYSIÄINEN. Series: Annales Academiae Scientiarum Fennicae Dissertationes Humanarum Litterarum 66. Helsinki: SUOMALAINEN TIEDEAKATEMIA, 1993. Pp. 186.

[1] Griffiths, p. 2. "I offer here, by way of corrective, a theory of doctrine intended to make possible the properly doctrinal study of doctrine. The theory is a formal and systematic one: it picks out a discursive practice and its artifacts, provides an outline of questions of concern to those engaged in this practice, and discusses the properties of the artifacts produced by the practice. . . . [S]ince it is a theory intended primarily as a first step in grounding and making possible the constructive and critical study of doctrine considered as such, and not in terms of other phenomena, to criticize it by saying that it pays insufficient attention to nondoctrinal phenomena will be to miss its point."

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One might argue that it is possible to employ reductionist approaches without in the process negating the properly doctrinal meaning of doctrines. But Griffiths goes beyond rejecting such approaches and confines the proper study of doctrine to a formal, ahistorical study of the rational cogency of truth claims made in the variety of texts examined. Many would demur, reminding us that the proper study of doctrine lies always within some concrete context of thought and practice. To take the context of a text into account is not to reduce doctrine to epiphenomena, but to set it in a concrete life situation. Thus, despite his warnings about missing the point, I think that Griffiths does pay insufficient attention, not to nondoctrinal matters, but to the lived context that alone gives doctrinal statements their meaning. Without such a contextualizing of doctrine, its meaning floats free in clouds of pure rationality. Griffiths falsely assumes that any issues not generated from a formal analysis of the text are nondoctrinal, but if doctrines from the start are conditioned by their languages and circumstances, then the meanings they have or had cannot be understood without understanding those conditions. The difficult task of understanding the meaning of a doctrine, embedded as it is in the texture of a particular culture and practice, is not to be passed over in a rush to judgment. In effect, the formal analytical method adopted in this book is itself a reductive procedure that denudes texts and leaves them supine, ready to submit to the analytical procedures to be performed upon them.[2] It is doctrinally significant that the doctrine of Buddha developed in an ongoing argumentation between the varied schools that Griffiths lumps together as if they presented a single buddhalogical view.

The method is reductionist in its objectivist stance: "[I]t does privilege, by paying exclusive attention to, a synchronic study of logic, relations, and constructed linguistic items as objects in their own right, without adverting much to their history, their practical uses, or their nondoctrinal functions" (p. 3). One might add: . . . without paying attention to their religious meaning. To study the doctrinal meaning of doctrinal claims means that one has to attend to the vagaries of various thinkers, texts, and schools. Without identifying their varied philosophical perspectives, and the give-and-take of their disputations, it is not valid to lump a bunch of texts together ahistorically simply because they discuss the same general issue.

Griffiths assumes that the meaning of doctrines is to be ascertained by the careful analysis of their surface grammar. "My suggestion at this point is only that if some doctrine-expressing sentence's surface grammar does indeed give the impression that it is being used as a description by its community, this possibility should not be ruled out a priori . . . Indeed, one of the chief interests that doctrinal studies has lies here: religious communities typically use their doctrines to make complex and interesting claims of metaphysical, ontological, ethical, and epistemological interest" (p. 22). The false assumption here is that the surface grammar of doctrinal statements yields a firm and ascertainable meaning apart from its concrete context, and thus analysis can identify the claims so made with a view to comparison and critique.[3] By contrast, I would argue that there is no level playing ground on which various surface doctrines can be compared. To do so reduces the very textual and historical conditionality of the truth-expressing statements and pretends to have pinpointed their meaning in pure, transculturally valid acts of rational analysis. But meanings shift as contexts change.[4] And contexts change as patterns of experience, insight, and judgment differ. The surface grammar of sentences cannot be interpreted in disregard of the overall tradition in which they are embedded. Griffiths is concerned with the formal analysis of doctrines that yield themselves almost immediately to the skilled analyst, and not with their context-laden doctrinal meanings. Yet, other scholars of Western doctrine, such as Jaroslav Pelikan, who is appealed to here as a parallel doctrinal scholar, do not confuse the need to take texts in context with the reductionist claims of postmodern critics.[5] To take texts in context is not to reduce their content to epiphenomena.[6] On the contrary, to ignore their context is reductionist, lifting them out of any lived setting and consigning them to the realm of a disembodied rational analysis.[7]

One cannot validly "isolate and explore the doctrinal dimensions of Buddhist discourse about these matters [what makes a Buddha], and by so doing . . . arrive at a synthetic view of buddhalogical orthodoxy among medieval Indian Buddhist intellectuals" (p. xviii). When, in chapter seven, Griffiths comes to offer a doctrinal criticism elicited from this formal theory of doctrine, one wonders about the value of such an anachronistic, ahistorical critique, detached from human beings. The buddhalogical discourse of the digests belongs to an historical and epistemological context, now archaic and, with the passing of that context, has for the most part already lost its evocative impact on Buddhists themselves. Are the elements analyzed still of ongoing import within the Buddhist tradition? Why critique archaic doctrines?

[2] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage, 1979), 239: "To do this he must see every detail through the device of a set of reductive categories. . . . A vision therefore is static, just as the scientific categories informing late-nineteenth-century Orientalism are static. . . ." There occurs, I think, a methodological *tour de force* when analytic reasoning dispenses with the tasks of interpreting meaning in context, especially when the texts in question, far from trying to present a total view of reality, warn against that option. The Mahāyāna texts present a conventional discourse always claimed to be an aid to practice and warn against any clinging to views. Again Said, p. 240: "Against this static system of 'synchronic essentialism' I have called vision because it presumes that the whole Orient can be seen panoptically, there is a constant pressure. The source of pressure is narrative. . . . Moreover, narrative is the specific form taken by written history to counter the permanence of vision. . . . Above all, it [i.e., narrative] asserts that the domination of reality by vision is no more than a will to power, a will to truth and interpretation, and not an objective condition of history. . . . [It] violates the serene Apollonian fictions asserted by vision."

[3] Griffiths writes: "Consider the sentence *Jesus Christ is God's only-begotten son*, affirmed as expressive of doctrine by some Christian communities, and the Islamic doctrine-expressing sentence *God does not beget*. If, as the surface grammar of these sentences suggests, each is intended as an attribution of some property to God . . . then it is clear that God cannot possess both properties . . . " (p. 8). Yet there are clear and obvious differences in the cultural and philosophical texture of the traditions that underlie and support the meanings of doctrines. I would suggest that both of the above statements can be true. The first grew out of the particular Greek ontological framework of the Trinitarian doctrine and takes its meaning only within that context, wherein all notion of physical begetting is excluded. By contrast, the Islamic negation rejects not only crude notions of paternity, but also the evolved Greek framework of Christian doctrine. One knows this only after and through a culturally sensitive and lengthy study of doctrines in their cultural contexts, and not by the surface grammar. See Joseph S. O'Leary, *La Vérité chrétienne à l'âge du pluralisme religieux* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1994), 269: "What does [the affirmation that Jesus is God] signify concretely? The answer is not given apart from the entire history in which the figure of Jesus is inserted." Likewise, the question of what Buddha means cannot be divorced from the entirety of Buddhist history.

[4] See George A. Lindbeck, *The Nature of Doctrine* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1984), 64: "Thus for a Christian, 'God is Three and One,' or 'Christ is Lord' are true only as parts of a total pattern of speaking, thinking, feeling, and acting. They are false when their use in any given instance is inconsistent with what the pattern as a whole affirms of God's being and will. The crusader's battle cry 'Christus est Dominus,' for example, is false when used to authorize cleaving the skull of the infidel (even though the same words in other contexts may be a true utterance). . . . The mistake of a primarily cognitive-propositional theory of religion, from a cultural-linguistic perspective, is to overlook this difference [between the intrasystematic and the ontological truth of statements]. It is unable to do justice to the fact that a religious system is more like a natural language than a formally organized set of explicit statements, and that the right use of this language, unlike a mathematical one, cannot be detached from a particular way of behaving."

[5] Griffiths writes: "But such [doctrinal] studies [of doctrine] are no longer in the ascendant. They have been called into question in theory, even if not yet abandoned in practice, by the view that instances of doctrinal thought and expression should be treated only in terms of their relations to the nondoctrinal phenomena that constitute the setting in which they occur" (p. 1). But the practice of reading texts only in context is not a product of postmodern thinkers and demands no reductionist practice, although it will be greatly benefitted by such. Rather, it is simply good exegesis. Griffiths further notes (p. 203, n. 1): "Among those working on Christianity I think of Pelikan, whose recently completed history of doctrine in five volumes (*Christian Tradition*) is self-conscious about treating doctrine as doctrine and not as an epiphenomenon of something else." However, Pelikan treats the doctrinal development of what is believed, confessed, and taught always with a detailed exposition of the ongoing context, noting that "[t]radition without history has homogenized all the stages of development into one statically defined truth." See Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1971), 1:9.

[6] See O'Leary, *La Vérité chrétienne*, 120. "The referential force or objectivity [of statements] is mediated through these factors (their function and their context) and remains provisional. . . . The recognition of such an objectivity in religious statements goes beyond expressionistic or pragmatic reductionism, without on that account falling into naively objectivist conceptions of religious language."

[7] A counter example is the method of Louis Massignon, described by Said, *Orientalism*, 267: "What he wished deliberately to avoid was what he called 'l'analyse analytique et statique de l'orientalisme,' a sort of inert piling up, on a supposed Islamic text or problem, of sources, origins, proofs, demonstrations, and the like. Everywhere his attempt is to include as much of the context of a text or problem as possible, to animate it, to surprise his reader, almost, with the glancing insights available to anyone who, like Massignon, is willing to cross disciplinary and traditional boundaries in order to penetrate to the human heart of any text."

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The issue of the context for buddhalogy is a difficult one, for we are in large part uninformed about the history behind the digests. But there are indications. Griffiths does identify an intellectual difficulty in affirming the one, eternal Buddha while at the same time allowing for numerous other Buddha bodies (on earth and in heaven): "The need is therefore for an explanation of apparent multiplicity in the context of actual unity" (p. 145). That is a good start, but, as I argued in the introduction to *The Realm of Awakening*, one gains a far richer understanding if one takes the textual references to various other Buddhas at work in the world as indications of the presence and pressure of devotional bhakti practices. The need then was not to make ontological statements, but to include bhakti practices to other Buddhas, interpreted as Enjoyment Bodies of Buddha, within Mahāyāna faithfulness to the traditional paradigm of Śākyamuni, lest Buddhism go the way of the varied Hindu cults. The need is then not simply to resolve a conceptual difficulty, but to bring into harmony the actual practice of worshipping many different Buddhas with the stress on the one body of Buddha. There are indications aplenty in the texts, but one would have to broaden the purview to include the sūtra texts about bhakti, for the commentaries comment on scripture and quite often their difficulties derive from scripture-based practice.[8] Buddhalogy is not then simply an aggregate of "broadly metaphysical explanations, based as they are upon certain views as to the properties of Buddha considered *svabhāvataḥ*, as it is in itself" (p. 146). The devil is in the details, in the flow of doctrinal and historical development, and not in putative formally structured truth-statements.

The method is reductionist not only in depriving texts of the richness of their concrete contexts, but also in its leveling of textual differences, of doctrinal categories, of contextual argumentation, and its fitting of Buddhist doctrines into the straightjackets of a naive realism and an unwarranted trust in the hegemony of analytical reason.[9]

The textual witnesses Griffiths adduces throughout the book are referred to globally as "the digests." He writes: "[T]he nature of the [temporal] relations between text and commentary in this period makes questions of date and provenance almost irrelevant to the kind of study pursued here. All these texts, whatever their differences on substantive matters (and these are many and of considerable interest), are recognizably products of the same intellectual practice. They use the same methods, presuppose the same technical vocabulary, and do their work, for the most part, in an intellectual universe constituted entirely inter- and intratextually" (p. 28). But the intertextuality of mutually referring texts does not signify the "sameness" of those texts. They differ greatly and in ways that impact their buddhalogical discourse. Abhidharma texts that hold to a substantialist view take their doctrines as indicative of the true state of affairs, while Mādhyamika and Yogācāra texts see the entire scholastic enterprise as conventional and not indicative of the true state of metaphysical affairs. Their intellectual practices clearly differ, from the formulation of true viewpoints to the rejection of all viewpoints, or to the evolution of views only in the context of a dependently co-arisen and conventional discourse. On the surface their commentarial genre is indeed parallel, yet they recommend distinctly different methodological practices. Yogācāra texts employ a specific exegetical vocabulary about the three natures, while Mādhyamika employs terms like emptiness, dependent co-arising, and the two truths. These themes are not discrete doctrine alongside buddhalogical doctrines, but have clear and insistent methodological consequences for reading all doctrine. The intertextuality of the texts is one of argumentation, not agreement. Would one lump together Ernest Renan and G. K. Chesterton because both wrote essays on Christianity? Thus when Griffiths writes that he will "take the texts as they present themselves: as of transhistorical systematic doctrinal interest, not as historically or institutionally located artifacts (although they are of course that too)" (p. 29), he errs, for texts do not present themselves at all. One has to go and reclaim them by reading, and by interpreting.

But such an error is perhaps demanded by the procedure, for if one refuses to digest the texts, their doctrinal explanations tend to escape the totalizing rationality desired. One avoids their textual argumentation by lumping together all the texts with their various distinct epistemic philosophies: Abhidharma, Mādhyamika, Yogācāra, Tathāgatagarbha. Those epistemic philosophies affect the interpretation of statements, individually and globally. To level these differences in favor of an essentialistic analysis is to assume a stance overarching the texts, forcing them into compliance. "Thus one ends with a typology—based on a real specificity, but detached from history, and, consequently, conceived as being intangible, essential—which makes of the studied 'object' another being with regard to whom the studying subject is transcendent."[10] Griffiths provides the reader not with a breadth of textual sources, but with a chrestomathy of texts, in which a rather limited set of chosen witnesses delivers buddhalogy to the reader. He presents buddhalogy "by a series of representative fragments, fragments republished, explicated, annotated, and surrounded with still more fragments. For such a presentation a special genre is required: the chrestomathy. . . ."[11]

Griffiths recognizes the tension in buddhalogical discourse between its metaphysical and soteriological aspects, "a tension capable of resolution finally only in metaphysical terms; this will become clear only in chapter six" (p. 84). But that tension is resolved in some of the texts by the Mādhyamika doctrine of the two truths or the Yogācāra teaching on the three natures; i.e., there is an exegetical and hermeneutic procedure for reading inscribed in the Yogācāra texts themselves.[12] And the only resolution comes not in metaphysics, which can be used either for sound practice or for deluded attachment to ideas, but in efficacious practice.[13]

It is perfectly valid to cite a Tathāgatagarbha text such as the *Ratnagotravibhāga* on the essential nature of Buddha (p. 175), or an Abhidharma doctrine on the "reals," the dharmas (p. 178), but why is there no mention at all of the *Madhyamakakārikā* (ch. 22 treats Buddha), or any of the many other treatises of Nāgārjuna, such as *Yuktiṣaṣṭikā* or *Vigrahavyāvartanī*? The argument of these treatises, that reality is beyond all ontological and epistemological dualities, does not allow the description of any final state of Buddha, but reduces all language to the role of skillful means.[14] And why not

[8] P. Griffiths, N. Hakamaya, J. Keenan, and P. Swanson, *The Realm of Awakening: Chapter Ten of Asaṅga's Mahāyānasaṃgraha* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1989), 32–39.

[9] See O'Leary, *La Vérité chrétienne*, 306–7: "A religion has its distinct and irreducible contours just as much as an artistic tradition; one cannot speak intelligently about it without first having immersed oneself in its thought habits and creative procedures. The spirit of detachment that is considered the guarantee of objectivity in analytic philosophy is incompatible with the theological need to remain sensitive to subtle resonances, to historical associations, and to existential Stimmungen of the primary terms of Christian discourse. Analytic reason does no more than play the busybody in theology as long as it refuses to allow itself to be rebuilt and transformed into a properly theological reasoning, and that demands first of all a faithful attention to the underlying phenomena of faith which alone permits the appearance of phenomena. The analytic philosophers of religion have a tendency to denounce the theologians as confused spirits, but it may be that what they take as confusion is rather the hermeneutic and phenomenological finesse required by what is given in Christian tradition. . . . Rooting thinking in a meditation on the phenomenology of phenomena, it places itself in front of imperialistic rationality, supplying faith a method of thinking more appropriate to its content than solely logical reasoning."

[10] Anwar Abdel Malek, "Orientalism in Crisis," *Diogenes* 44 (Winter 1963): 107–8. Cited in Said, *Orientalism*, 97.

[11] Said, *Orientalism*, 128. See also p. 78: "To rule and to learn, then to compare Orient with Occident: these were [William] Jones's goals, which, with an irresistible impulse always to codify, to subdue the infinite variety of the Orient to 'a complete digest' of laws, figures, customs, and works, he is believed to have achieved." And so Griffiths speaks of "the digests," when what is happening is that he is digesting.

[12] For instance, the *Mahāyānasaṃgraha* 2.32, gives explicit hermeneutic instructions that the properties of the Buddha are to be elucidated in terms of the three patterns. "If one desires to interpret the overall doctrine of the Great Vehicle in summary, he should treat the three themes: (1) he should elucidate the character of dependent co-arising, (2) he should elucidate the true character of dependently co-arisen states, and (3) he should elucidate the meaning of what has been taught [in the scriptures in light of the above two]. . . . The elucidation of what has been taught consists in explaining and analyzing texts that have been previously taught in the light of later commentaries, whether concerning the assemblage of good qualities [of the Buddha] or the various aims of practice [of bodhisattvas]" (*The Summary of the Great Vehicle*, tr. John Keenan [Berkeley: Numata, 1992], 46–47). This text goes on to do just that, but its explanations never attempt to reach a metaphysical view that would remain absolute and not dependently co-arisen.

[13] In the doctrinal context of their teaching of emptiness both Mādhyamika and Yogācāra devote much effort to the provisional character of all statements and see truth claims as more or less skillful means (*upāya*) to aid practitioners in their practice. They could hardly agree that it ever occurs that metaphysical claims are basic, upon which "the soteriological explanations are parasitic, and from which they are detachable" (Griffiths, p. 176). Nothing is so detachable, for the interest is not in metaphysics at all. Quite the contrary, metaphysical claims are conventional explanations considered to be parasitic upon the path practices they aid, and to be abandoned otherwise.

[14] On the absence of all dualistic thinking on the part of Buddha, Griffiths writes: "This classificatory analysis of *vikalpa* is intended as a complete though schematic account of the various ways in which we construct for ourselves the world of everyday experience, the world of subsistent subjects experiencing persistent objects and reacting to such experiences with various kinds of affect. It should be clear that *vikalpa* understood in this way is unambiguously salvifically negative for the digests. . . . The awareness belonging to Buddha, then, is free

discuss the *Mahāyānasaṃgraha* passages on the emptiness of all things?

Griffiths writes that "it would have been possible to accept the maximal-greatness intuition and to develop it not in connection with Buddha but with dharma. But the digests do not typically do this: rather, they take the complex of strictly metaphysical terms surrounding (and derived from) 'dharma' and make its members predicates of Buddha. Buddha thus swallows up dharma rather than the other way around" (p. 184). But the single textual corpus devoted solely to the theme of Buddha is not cited at all, the commentaries on the *Buddhabhūmi-sūtra*. These texts, the Tibetan *Buddhabhūmivyākhyāna* of Śākyabhadra and the Chinese *Buddhabhūmyupadeśa* of Bandhuprabha, treat *buddhatvā* as composed of the five dharmas: the pure Dharma Realm (*dharmadhātuparisuddhi*) and the four wisdoms of mirror, equality, discernment, and duty-fulfillment. Here the pure Dharma Realm functions as the object and support for awakening, and in no way swallows up everything in Buddha.[15]

Indeed this *Buddhabhūmi* corpus is the final development of the Yogācāra meditation on Buddha, and yet it is passed over in silence by Griffiths. These texts sketch a Buddha mind not only beyond all duality, but also engaged in discernment and action. One may hold that their doctrine is not internally consistent, but it is not valid procedure simply to ignore that teaching. When Griffiths says, "[i]t follows directly from these claims that there are no dualistic states of affairs not implicated with conceptual or affective error, for if there were they would be directly present to Buddha's awareness; and they are not" (p. 199), or that "it follows that there are no subjects and no objects other than Buddha, which is itself strictly neither subject nor object. Monism of at least this kind is unavoidable, and the metaphysical game ends with the claim that Buddha is the only thing there is: not only is everything well-spoken spoken by Buddha, but every instance of veridical awareness is an instance of Buddha-awareness" (p. 199), he operates upon texts by dissecting them, pushing fragmentary elements of the digests to a doctrinal conclusion that some of the texts make (*Ratnagotravibhāga*, *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra*), but that others do not make or even forbid one from making. Even the oft-cited *Mahāyānasaṃgraha* explicitly says that Buddha is neither one nor many, i.e., beyond the final conclusion of any metaphysical game altogether.

It is rather disingenuous to say that "[t]he digests therefore show evidence of only two possibilities: one that took the implications of its own buddhalogy seriously, and so argued, in a strictly metaphysical way, for an absolute idealism; and another that refused, rhetorically at least, the metaphysical route altogether, while still engaging in constructive buddhalogy" (p. 200). That second route is inscribed in all the Mahāyāna texts of Mādhyamika or Yogācāra provenance and renders the entire buddhalogical endeavor primarily soteriological. To the Mahāyānists it is not a question of a rhetorical refusal to come to metaphysical terms, but rather of a radical critique of the pretensions of language to grasp awakening.[16]

from construction. But what, positively, could such awareness be like?" (p. 155). Yet the *Buddhabhūmi* corpus presents Buddha as comprising both non-dual mirror wisdom, and the progressively more worldly engaged wisdoms of equality, discernment, and duty-fulfillment, all of which are *savikalpa*. Indeed, that seems to be their main import. There is then no need for the rather strange theory offered on pp. 162–63 that interprets Buddha's silence as a non-volitional and non-deliberative utterance, in which "the semantic content of what is uttered is not present to the mind of the utterer." The Yogācāra texts themselves speak of the transformation of consciousness as issuing in the four wisdoms, the latter three of which are engaged in *vikalpa*. The Mādhyamika texts say the Buddha did not speak, in order to empty all content clung to as absolute, just as did the foundational Prajñāpāramitāsūtras. As the *Vajracchedika* has it: "The Bhagavat said: 'What do you think, Subhūti, does it ever occur to the Tathāgata that "By me is the Dharma shown"?' Subhūti said, 'Not so, Bhagavat, it does not so occur.' The Bhagavat said, 'Whoever, Subhūti, would say that "By the Tathāgata is the Dharma shown" would speak falsely and calumniate me, Subhūti, by grasping what is not. Why? The Dharma teaching is termed the Dharma teaching, but there is no Dharma teaching to be apprehended as the Dharma teaching' " (verse 21).[17] It is to be noted here that the denial of anything to be apprehended as Dharma teaching is stated by Buddha, and its import is that one should grasp nothing, even religion. Thus, before praising the issue of subsequently attained wisdom on p. 163, one should place that issue in its own intellectual context of Mahāyāna emptiness.

[15] Indeed some of the chosen and cited passages that Griffiths takes to refer to a neuter Buddha ("it") in fact refer to the reality that supports and is the object of wisdom. The passage from the *Mahāyānasaṃgraha* cited on p. 176 on the four kinds of purity, as well as the *Saṃdhinirmocanasūtra* passage cited on p. 177, thematize *tathatā*, whether there are Buddhas or not. It is that original purity that is attained by the removal of stains which constitutes one a Buddha. It is hardly good exegesis simply to equate terms for ultimate reality with Buddha considered as a neuter reality.

[16] On the absence of any dualistic thought on the part of Buddha, Griffiths writes: "Is there, then, another way out of this intellectual impasse? One possibility, mentioned several times already in the course of this study, is the abandonment of the maximal-greatness intuition as the major buddhalogical doctrine-producing engine: the digest could have (though they did not) come to think of Buddha simply as maximally soteriologically important, not as maximally metaphysically significant. But this possibility was, as I have shown, considered and rejected . . ." (p. 201). But Mādhyamika texts do reject all metaphysical claims whatsoever. And Yogācāra sees them as other-dependent, never absolute.

[17] See Griffiths et al., *The Realm of Awakening*, 82.

[18] Griffiths et al., *The Realm of Awakening*, 91.

[19] Thus Griffiths' interpretation of the passage from the *Madhyamakavṛtti* on pp. 161–62 is correct in saying that there is "no designatum, nothing capable of being referred to and so nothing capable of being taught." But that does not imply that there is no modus significandi, no way of speaking about reality. Rather, it entails the abandonment of essentialist categories that pretend to refer precisely to the realities spoken of and the adoption of doctrinal discourse as skillful means, as conventional speech. See Lindbeck, *The Nature of Doctrine*, 66–67. Thus when Griffiths says, "[m]y goal is to show, in other words, that the digests strongly suggest the conclusion that it is not like anything to Buddha to be Buddha" (p. 190), that inconceivability is not a metaphysical description of a changeless and monistic Buddha reality, but a critique of speculative visions.

There are also examples of ignoring the intratextual and doctrinal context of texts. In trying to demonstrate the permanence and eternality of Buddha on p. 179, Griffiths cites one of the characteristics of Dharma Body from the *Mahāyānasaṃgraha*, that of eternity. But there are five such characteristics, four of which are never mentioned. The first is that Dharma Body is characterized by conversion of support, which is explained as the conversion from the defiled to the pure aspect of the other-dependent nature of consciousness. That hardly suggests an eternally existent, changeless Buddha. The second describes Dharma Body as composed of radiant factors, the ten masteries and the six perfections. Again the focus is upon the attainment of awakening by conscious human beings. The third explains that Dharma Body is characterized by the non-duality of existence and non-existence. If one cannot predicate existence of Dharma Body, how can it be described as eternal and changeless *in se*? The text of the *Mahāyānasaṃgraha* reads: "Neither existence nor non-existence means that [Dharma Body] is neither eternal nor ending, for it is apart from these two extremes."[17] The fourth, which is treated, describes the eternity of Dharma Body, "because its activity is unending," i.e., its activity in the world. And the fifth and last describes Dharma Body as characterized by inconceivability, "because it cannot be compared to anything in the world and is beyond the scope of speculation."[18] The recommendation here is not to hold to any view of an eternal, changeless Buddha essence, but to abandon such speculation altogether.[19] Why omit these passages from the chrestomathy?

To be aware that Buddha's Dharma Body is beyond image and metaphor is not merely a matter of formal assent. The rhetorically elicited response is awed silence, just as before the God whom no image or word can convey. On pp. 192–93 Griffiths writes: "We know all that there is to know about what it's like to be Buddha precisely because there is nothing to know, and we can know that formal fact. Now, denying that it is like something to be Buddha is precisely the same as denying that Buddhas have conscious mental states, since having such states is just what it means for there to be something it is like to be a particular being." Here, he misunderstands the absence of image to be a formal privation, rather than a fullness beyond image or metaphor. In a Christian context, the same logic applies to God, for there is no image for God and God is like nothing else, for to the Christian theologians God is not a particular being among beings.

The reductive categories are again evident when Griffiths comes to consider Buddha's lack of experience, dividing all experiences into perceptual, conative, affective, judgmental, and memorial. Thus, "[t]he experience of bats comprises most, probably all, of these elements, as also does that of human persons; that of Buddha comprises none" (p. 193). Yet the texts do describe the Dharma Body as the conversion of support from defiled to purified other-dependent consciousness, defined above as endowed with both insight and image. When they speak of Dharma Body as being beyond all conceivable categories, they do not suggest a further category of the absence of experience. To say that "first, the perceptual experience of Buddha has no phenomenal flavor" (p. 193) goes directly against the constant refrain of the *Buddhabhūmi* corpus that Equality wisdom has the one universal, phenomenal flavor of emptiness. To say that "decision- or choice-making experience is denied to Buddha altogether" (p. 193) negates the *Buddhabhūmi*'s explicit teaching on Discernment and Duty-Fulfillment wisdoms, which, respectively, identify the compassionate tasks to be performed and ways to carry them out.

Griffiths argues that the engine moving the buddhalogical enterprise along was the intuition of maximal greatness, according to which one must predicate the most of Buddha. He derives this criterion from Kant,

apparently by way of Lindbeck.[20] Griffiths writes: "If there are any transcultural universals in the sphere of religious thinking it is probable that among them is the attempt to characterize, delineate, and, if possible, exhaustively define maximal greatness. . . . I suggest, in sum, that it will be useful and illuminating to think of the buddhalogical enterprise as an example of thinking motivated by the desire to limn maximal greatness, and that the constraints upon such an enterprise will turn out to be, broadly, those provided by the metaphysic of the system within which particular instances of buddhalogical thinking occur . . . " (p. 59). But in a Mahāyāna doctrinal context, since things are empty of essence (*svabhāva*), there are no transcultural universals at all. When the texts speak of what is essential (*svabhāvitaḥ*), they are speaking conventionally. Some Buddhist traditions reject an essential notion of a great Buddha—no Buddhas anywhere, for they mistrust fixations on ideas. Others, Tathāgatagarbha perhaps, admit an essential Buddha identified with reality, but hardly erect that into a consistent metaphysic.

Only if maximal greatness were understood as the emptiness of maximal greatness, and not as the metaphysical motor for buddhalogy, would it be adequate to the task. Lindbeck is right on the mark when he writes: "in short, the cultural-linguistic approach is open to the possibility that different religions and/or philosophies may have incommensurable notions of truth, of experience, and of categorical adequacy, and therefore also of what it would mean for something to be most important (i.e., 'God'). Unlike other perspectives, this approach proposes no common framework such as that supplied by the propositionalist's concept of truth. . . . "[21] It seems that Griffiths ignores such possibilities, for he filters buddhalogical discourse through metaphysical categories about maximally great being, i.e., Buddha, categories that were probably indeed operative in Western christology, but hardly in Mahāyāna philosophy. And that is yet another result of a reductionist methodology.[22]

In sum, the critique given by Griffiths holds only if one reads just the textual fragments selected, and if one ignores their context in life, and if one overlooks the historical argumentation taking place, and if one ignores the hermeneutic instructions inscribed in the texts themselves, and if one ignores texts that present a different interpretation. There is a selective ignoring of basic texts and themes: of emptiness as deconstructive of views, of the three patterns of consciousness, of the two truths, of entire digests, especially the *Buddhabhūmi* texts that treat Buddha exclusively. Further, there is an agglomeration of schools (Abhidharma, Tathāgatagarbha, Mādhyamika, Yogācāra), and there is no notice of the impact of Mahāyāna and Prajñāpāramitā sūtras on the Mahāyāna texts. The conclusion is reached:

> [E]ven the traditional doctrinal claim that there are three refuges (Buddha, dharma, sangha) from suffering, and that each of the three has an important salvific function to fulfill, is judged by the digests to be false: not only the dharma, what is real as well as what is preached, but also the sangha, the community that preserves the doctrine to be preached, are absorbed into the omnipresent Buddha. *Sarvaṃ buddhatvam*—everything is Buddhahood. . . . for in the end there can be nothing else, if the buddhalogy of the digests is indeed to be defended, than Buddha *in se*: no non-Buddhas, no dharma, no sangha. This is a properly metaphysical claim. I take it to be entailed by the buddhalogy of the digests, and it is with it that we finally reach the point at which the thrust of the digests' buddhalogical discourse can be made clear. This is the final move in the metaphysical game whose strategy I have been mapping since chapter three. (p. 198)

When one reaches such a conclusion, one should pause and consider whether the preceding methodological steps have presented the doctrinal discourse in its complexity or whether one has extracted elements from that discourse and pushed them to a conclusion. There are, no doubt, many passages from Tathāgatagarbha tradition and from Yogācāra texts that do entail the conclusions Griffiths presents. But *in situ* they were not so pushed, but held in tensive check by other passages and texts that go unexamined here. The circumscribing buddhalogical discourse kept in check the docetic tendencies of these passages, and a full treatment of that argumentation is yet to be developed. Yet it seems clear that the monistic, docetic image of Buddha did not become the mainstream doctrine of Buddha in Mahāyāna. To flesh out how these developments of doctrine happened, one has to write a doctrinal history of buddhalogy in terms of its overall doctrinal context. For the "properly metaphysical" claim is negated by the Mahāyāna texts, who do not consider themselves to be playing any "metaphysical game" at all, since they deny that there is anything *in se* at all.

One must reject the final summation given, that "[t]his metaphysical conclusion . . . ends, I think, by denying the most fundamental doctrinal commitment of the digests, which is . . . that of radical unsatisfactoriness (*duḥkhatā*): the diagnostic and prescriptive soteriological commitments of the digests . . . are left aside in favor of a quietist contemplation of what the contemplator already is" (p. 201). One must reject it because one must reject the reductionist methodology by which it is reached. No formal analysis can proceed by ignoring counter texts and counter doctrines. Griffiths has shown clearly that such tendencies do exist in Indian texts. But, by ignoring the texture of the texts, by bracketing their circle of argumentation in favor of a rational analysis of fragments, he pushes things to a neat and invalid conclusion. It is rather like studying the essence of a jellyfish by cutting off all its tentacles to get at the inner core, and then claiming that it exists apart from its surrounding environment because it has no tentacles.

* * *

Pyysiäinen's work, like Griffiths', ranges over a selection of texts from various sources, Theravāda, Sarvāstivāda, Lokottaravāda, early Mahāyāna, Mādhyamika, Yogācāra, and Tathāgatagarbha, but his approach is quite different. He adopts a phenomenological analysis, looking in the texts for the "tracks" of mystical experiences that transcend the pervasive filters of language. Such experiences are characterized, following a typology presented by Griffiths,[23] as pure consciousness, unmediated experience, and nondualistic experience. Any one of these types of experiences is counted as mystical and Pyysiäinen concludes that the central doctrines and practice of Buddhism are penetrated by mysticism (p. 155).

His focus on mystical experiences gives him an understanding of doctrine quite at variance with Griffiths, for "[a]ll conceptual interpretations are only a skillful means to point to the experience or mystical knowledge that ultimately can be grasped through subjective intuition only. In other words, experiencing takes precedence over conceptualization . . . " (p. 155). Thus, although Pyysiäinen, like Griffiths, is engaged in a rational reconstruction of the texts as "a timeless product, the ideas of which can be taken as contributions to the present scholarly debates" (p. 20), doctrine serves as a subsequent step after experience and is subservient to experience.[24]

[20] Lindbeck, *The Nature of Doctrine*, 32–33: "Not every telling of one of these cosmic stories is religious, however. It must be told with a particular purpose or interest. It must be used, to adopt a suggestion of William Christian, with a view to identifying and describing what is taken to be 'more important than everything else in the universe,' and to organizing all of life, including both behavior and beliefs, in relation to this. If the interpretive scheme is used or the story is told without this interest in the maximally important, it ceases to function religiously." Again: "Third, there is the principle of what may be infelicitously called Christological maximalism: every possible importance is to be ascribed to Jesus that is not inconsistent with the first rules [that there is one God, and that Jesus is historical]" (p. 94). Such a criterion can be judged operative in christology because that doctrine developed within an essential framework, but the Mahāyāna buddhalogy did not. One then wonders if an accurate interpretation can be made that forces the Mahāyāna into an alien essentialist framework. The author may himself hold to that essentialism, but the texts (the digests) do not. What is maximally great in Mahāyāna is what is maximally desired, i.e., awakening (Buddha) as that which is to be desired as the reverse of suffering. The Prajñāpāramitā scriptures deny that there is any maximally great Buddha at all: only because no Buddha exists does Buddha exist. What is maximally great is to be free from greatness.

[21] Lindbeck, *The Nature of Doctrine*, 49.

[22] Edward Said (*Orientalism*, 60), in an analogous way, comments upon the leveling of Islamic thought to Christian patterns: "But what is more important still [in describing Western appropriations of the Orient] is the limited vocabulary and imagery that impose themselves as a consequence. . . . One constraint acting upon Christian thinkers who tried to understand Islam was an analogical one; since Christ is the basis of Christian faith, it was assumed—quite incorrectly—that Mohammed was to Islam as Christ was to Christianity." Is there such a spurious analogy operative in the buddhalogical critique of Griffiths? Griffiths does observe (pp. 201–2) that "[t]he only other possibility is radical change in one or more of the digests' intuitions as to what count as great-making properties. Most of the intellectual problems discussed in this chapter are related more or less closely to the intuition that the lexical item 'Buddha' must denote the collection of second-order properties held in common by all first-order existents; and that, as an entailment of this position, Buddha must necessarily be changeless, eternal, and so forth. This move could have been avoided (as its Christian counterpart, I believe, can also be avoided): had it been it would have been possible for the Buddhist intellectual tradition in India to avoid the subsumption of dharma into Buddha, and so to preserve a critically realist, nonmonistic metaphysic." Yet the very Buddhist texts that empty all discourse of its supposed absolute content are left unexamined here.

[23] Paul J. Griffiths, "Pure Consciousness and Indian Buddhism," in *The Problem of Pure Consciousness: Mysticism and Philosophy*, ed. Robert K. C. Forman (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1990), 71–97.

[24] Pyysiäinen, p. 56: "This also means that the analysis does not focus on texts as such, but on ideas expressed in texts. I . . . aim . . . to extract the mystical elements from the texts, through philosophical analysis."

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Even more importantly, he differs markedly from Griffiths in that he realizes that objectivist and essentialist categories are not congruent with the Buddhist discourses he treats. "The Buddha's Dharma-body and *tathāgatagarbha* . . . are only 'skillful means (*upāya*)' to point to the ultimate truth (*paramārtha*) and thus should not be confused with the truth itself. In the last analysis, everything is empty (*śūnya*)" (p. 10). Aware of the pervasiveness of the doctrine of emptiness, he recognizes that the Buddhism the scholar extracts from the text is what he makes it to be: "Buddhism, as we understand it, has no independent existence apart from the community of scholars" (p. 15),[25] and he modestly evaluates his own phenomenological efforts as "scholarly guesswork," attaining not metaphysical status, but a "reasonable certainty" (p. 23).[26]

Pyysiäinen has some interesting things to say on the structure of mystical experiences. Commenting on an article by Arthur Deikman, he describes mysticism as being produced by meditation and renunciation and leading to a "deautomatization" of consciousness, i.e., the mind is emptied of accustomed patterns of discursive thought. This results in "a deautomatization of the *psychological* structures that organize, limit, select, and interpret perceptual stimuli," effecting an "undoing of automatization, presumably by *reinvesting actions and precepts with attention*."[27] This is interesting, for it reminds one of the work of Daniel Brown on the parallel perceptual structural changes that occur in following the paths of different religious practices.[28] Perhaps mystical experience is non-discursive simply in that ordinary patterns are suspended in a repatterning of attention, in a regaining of the ability to attend to what is ordinarily filtered out by the web of language-formed ideas and patterns of experience.[29] In such an interpretation, what happens is a shifting of patterns of attentiveness, guided by the tradition's directions for meditation and renunciation. Thus one would expect the actual mystic experiences to differ from one tradition to another, the only common features between traditions being the parallel structure of the formal preparatory steps and the abeyance of discriminative thought that allows space for a new attentiveness to roam.

But Pyysiäinen argues for a transcultural mystical experience. In George Lindbeck's typology,[30] he takes an experiential-expressivist stance that regards interpretations as secondary and not at all indicative of the mystical experience. This contrasts with Griffiths, who champions a propositionalist stance in which doctrines to be properly doctrines are metaphysical statements with their essentialist objectivity. Pyysiäinen writes: "Thus, a mystic uses meditation techniques to enable the mind to forget all thought and sensation in a PCE [pure consciousness event] where not only visual construction, but all construction has ceased. According to reports of many mystics, the forgetting includes also the teachings of the particular religious tradition in question. Thus, there remains nothing that could phenomenologically separate one PCE from another, and, consequently, these kinds of mystical experiences are alike in all cultures" (p. 47).[31] And again: "There is a total disjunction between the PCE and the verbal description that is made after the experience, and the PCE is thus ineffable in principle" (p. 48). One can then learn nothing at all about a mystical experience by examining subsequent descriptions.

> Consequently, it is impossible in every case to read from difference in verbal description a difference in the experience as well. A difference in verbal description made after the experience entails a difference in the meaning a mystic gives to his or her PCE, but it does not necessarily entail a difference in the experience (as a referent of the description).[32] Thus, the PCE could be the same in all cultures and traditions in spite of its various kinds of descriptions: a wakeful state of contentless consciousness that is like a hole in our ordinary experiencing. As such, it does not bring knowledge *during* the experience . . . , although it may bring knowledge as an effect after the experience. . . . What I have in mind is an effect that shows the relativity of the foundations of our discursive thinking and use of language. If the forms of perception and categories of thought are once transcended in a PCE, they are no longer felt as absolute and necessarily binding. (pp. 50–51)[33]

There is an obvious need for descriptions of mystical experiences. "The mystical experience would remain quite meaningless unless it were conceptualized, and thus incorporated into a person's total way of experiencing, i.e., to his or her life as a whole" (p. 41). Indeed, such descriptions are incorporated in the various traditions, where they play the role of a guide in the practice of prayer and renunciation. Hjalman Sundén is quoted on the need for reconditioning mental habits: "The liberating enlightenment is attainable only because the Buddhist knows certain models of behavior and perception, as well as certain roles which are embodied in the Buddhist tradition" (p. 30).[34] Although Pyysiäinen criticizes Sundén, it does seem that the preparatory stages of meditation and renunciation that direct the practitioner toward states of mystic consciousness cannot be so totally ignored, nor can the subsequent descriptions. All traditions use these verbalized accounts as rules of practice to distinguish false from authentic states of mind. They even claim that authentic mystical experiences are not available to non-practitioners, who tend to piggyback deep-seated delusions, such as attachment to self, onto momentary states of direct experience.

Pyysiäinen argues that "mystical experiences may count as an exception to the linguistic quality of man's being-in-the-world" (p. 36).[35] Yet, precisely as nonlinguistic, such experiences are immune from analysis, which works only by weighing and adjudicating words and ideas. They cannot themselves then become the object of study for any scholarly endeavor, whether propositional or phenomenological. All one has to work with are descriptions of the preparatory stages and subsequent descriptions of the experience, and these suggest specificity. Perhaps, more strictly, one must argue that mystic experiences simply provide no data whatsoever for any scholarly analysis, and lie in silence beyond any methodology. If indeed they are apart from words and ideas, there is simply nothing for insight to grasp or for judgment to adjudicate. And they prove nothing about their unique or different nature. However, by attending to the prior and subsequent descriptions of how they are elicited and what they mean, one can perhaps gain a respect for the traditional claims that they are beyond logic.

[25] See Pyysiäinen, p. 19. He follows Heidegger and Gadamer in seeing hermeneutic as a conversation between interpreter and text, not author: "The interpreter can only understand the text's meaning as it appears to *him* or *her*. Thus understanding always entails application (*Anwendung*), i.e., the interpreter integrates the text's message as part of his or her own *Seinsverständnis*)."

[26] Pyysiäinen, p. 23. "This study process proceeds as a phenomenological analysis of selected Buddhist texts in order to reveal ideological structures and interconnections relevant to the aim I have set for this study. . . . My hypothesis is that there are certain common elements which need to be explicated in all of my sources, although I do not want to deny that there are also incommensurabilities, and even contradictions. My sources certainly do not form one coherent system, but may, nevertheless, contain various, to some extent coherent subsystems."

[27] Deikman, "Deautomatization and the Mystic Experience," in *Altered States of Consciousness: A Book of Readings*, ed. Charles T. Tart (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1969), 23–43.

[28] Daniel P. Brown, "The Stages of Meditation in Cross-Cultural Perspective," in *Transformations of Consciousness*, ed. Ken Wilber, Jack Engler, and Daniel Brown (Boston: Shambala, 1986), 266: "The conclusions set forth here are nearly the opposite of that of the stereotyped notion of the perennial philosophy according to which many spiritual paths are said to lead to the same end. According to the careful comparison of the traditions we have to conclude the following: *there is only one path, but it has several outcomes*. There are several kinds of enlightenment, although all free awareness from psychological structure and alleviate suffering."

[29] Pyysiäinen, p. 27: "In contemplation, the percept receives attention while categorization and thought are prohibited. This 'undoing of automatic perceptual and cognitive structures permits a gain in sensory intensity and richness at the expense of abstract categorization and differentiation' [cited from Deikman, pp. 30–31]. However, sometimes a new vision takes place, as if everything is seen for the first time."

[30] See Lindbeck, *The Nature of Doctrine*, 30–32.

[31] Citing Robert Forman, "Introduction: Mysticism, Constructivism, and Forgetting," in *The Problem of Pure Consciousness* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press), 37–39.

[32] Pyysiäinen seems to agree with Rudolf Otto, Ninian Smart, W. T. Stace, Louis Dupré, and Philip Almond that differences are found only in subsequent interpretations, not in the mystical experience itself. On p. 33: "Thus, psychologists seem to hold that all mystical experiences are similar in their psychological structure (whatever that might be) and that only subsequent interpretations differentiate them."

[33] Perhaps Pyysiäinen is led to this experiential-expressivist stance through his critique of Steven Katz, who claims that, since mystical experiences are always causally shaped by one's concepts, there cannot be any pure, unmediated experience or consciousness. Thus, techniques lead only to a reconditioning. Thus, "the experience is determined in advance by cultural tradition, and thus mystics of different traditions cannot have the same experience" (p. 50). He criticizes Katz by arguing that Katz has not shown how the conditioning causes the experience. "All Katz has done is to *assume* that language enters and partly shapes and constructs all experience. . . . [Nor] has anyone else [presented valid arguments against the possibility of pure consciousness events] except the neo-Kantian type of epistemology that on *a priori* grounds allows no conscious escape from the forms of perception and categories of thought that mediate our experiencing of our being-in-the-world" (p. 50). His critique of Katz's assertions are, I think, valid, but if the meditative and renunciatory techniques lead not to a reconditioning, but to a restructuring of the very mechanism of conditioning in order to refocus attention, then, it seems to me, one simply cannot claim that the ineffable experiences are either the same or different.

[34] Hjalman Sundén, "Koänübung und Nervensystem," *Kairos* 8.34 (1966): 194–95.

[35] Pyysiäinen, pp. 37–38: "It may be granted that people mostly experience their being-in-the-world dualistically (experiencer-experienced) and that this experiencing has a linguistic basis. However, the question which remains is whether mysticism could be understood as an art of silence meant to restore man to a prelinguistic 'pure experience' not mediated by conceptual categories."

Often, mystical experiences are imaged spatially as higher or deeper than logic, temporarily prior or originary, more privileged somehow and more profound, blithely breaking the ordinary grammar of semantics and glorying in logical paradox. Pyysiäinen refers approvingly to Stace's view that " . . . mystical experience can be described verbally although those statements tend to be contradictory and paradoxical as the laws of logic have been transcended in the experience" (p. 48, n. 208). A more parsimonious account would hold that by refocusing one's attentiveness by temporarily suppressing the play of thought and image, one reaches not a higher or deeper realm of consciousness, but simply, as the mystics claim, a realm without thought or image, and thus without logic, for logic deals with the consistency of ideas. Thus mystical experience does not demonstrably go beyond or deeper than logic, as if it had reached a sphere superior to logic, but reclaims a space-time before logic has any role. Thus, "[t]he PCE is, then, like a hole in this series [of mental acts] and belongs to it, or is connected to it as a hole belongs to a sock" (p. 48). It is rather like regaining the childlike mind before one learns to differentiate things in language-formed categories, at play along the margins of the meaningful. If indeed we attend only to a limited field because of the pervasiveness of our language filters, then a refocusing of attention away from accustomed language-formed ideas and images, through the silencing of language, can enable us to attend to intense, revelatory experiences, without in any way negating the value of language in our filtered understanding. Yet, the role of language will be rethought, for no longer is one under the delusion that words have captured reality itself, given however briefly or however abidingly, in the intensity of bodily and mental silence.

And here Pyysiäinen does a better job than Griffiths, for he is quite aware of the impact of the doctrine of Mahāyāna emptiness on how one is to interpret doctrine. If indeed the texts speak about awakening (*buddhatvā*) as the empty goal of practice, they cannot be measured in purely logical categories as if they were circumscribed within an ontological theory. The error of metaphysical analysis is a genre error, misreading Mahāyāna texts as if they were Western tractates on being as such. To do this, one then has to coax out those themes which do make doctrinal statements about being (and nonbeing), while ignoring many of the principal teachings of those texts that thematize emptiness and direct the interpreter in how to read doctrine.

The new visions, e.g., Dharma Body, *buddhatvā*, are not logical claims, but reconfigurations of patterns of attentiveness experienced in *samādhi*. They have a direct causative effect on those descriptions. Thus, theories of Dharma Body are not explanatory statements of metaphysical fact, but descriptions of conversion experiences. These descriptions are not meant to be pushed single-mindedly to their logical terminations because, deriving from the abeyance of all logic in *samādhi*, they offer no more than descriptions from various, often diverse, angles. Indeed, echoing the basic thesis of the Mādhyamika-Prāsaṅgika school, Pyysiäinen states: "In other words, one can in principle arrive, with discursive thinking, at the conclusion that discursive thinking cannot reach the ultimate truth" (p. 43).

Pyysiäinen recognizes that the Mahāyāna does indeed make strong affirmations of a monistic reality. He entitles one section of his conclusion: "The Monistic Ontology of the Mahāyāna."[36] He writes that "[t]he Absolute is called by various names and epithets, such as 'the Realm of Dharma (*dharmatā*)', 'Dharma-element (*dharmadhātu*)', 'Suchness (*tathatā*)', and 'reality limit (*bhūtakoṭi*)'. This Dharma-element as the real essence of all *dharmas* is then said to stay fixed, whether buddhas appear in the world or not, and enlightenment means penetration into this absolute reality" (p. 108). Like Griffiths, Pyysiäinen cites texts from the Tathāgatagarbha lineage to bolster his interpretation. As Griffiths demonstrates in detail, one can find many such passages. But the issue remains as to how one is to interpret these passages. And many texts give instructions on how to do so: they must be interpreted in terms of emptiness or in terms of the three patterns, or in terms of the two truths. Which means that even monistic language is conventional language. Pyysiäinen introduces the above passage by alluding to the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*'s maxim about the moon-pointing finger not being the moon and then cites the famous passage from Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārika* on the two truths. We are dealing with conventional language and not with properly metaphysical claims understood in terms of Western objectivist philosophy, unless one is willing to grant that metaphysical claims do not reach any absolute real state of affairs but are themselves provisional and more or less skillfully created in light of their effect upon practitioners. Thus

[36] But Pyysiäinen interprets this ontology in social terms, not the doctrinally contextless analysis of Griffiths. See p. 151: "The egalitarianism of early Mahāyāna was accompanied by a monistic metaphysics essentially based upon the idea that the ultimate reality behind all appearances and illusions was a kind of buddha-nature. Thus, in reality nobody was unenlightened, and the ultimate goal of everyone was only to realize his or her inherent buddha-nature. In this way the abandonment of the strict distinction between laymen and monks went hand in hand with the abandonment of the idea of two spheres of reality, the compounded saṃsāra and the uncompounded nirvāṇa."

Pyysiäinen speaks of the absolute beyond compounded and uncompounded, for "the reality is not uncompounded in contradistinction to compounded, but rather something transcending this duality" (p. 110). These terms are only expressions of "vulgar experience" because they are metaphors (p. 111).

Since all is empty, essence-free cessation has nothing that ultimately differentiates it from essence-free *saṃsāra*. Citing the *Mahāyānasaṃgraha*, Pyysiäinen explains that "Asaṅga says likewise that the buddhas are at once 'absolutely in nirvāṇa (*atyantanirvṛta*) and absolutely not in nirvāṇa" (p. 112). The passage is instructive in light of Griffiths' claim to have identified an absolute dichotomy between the changing world and the changeless Buddha. Asaṅga's passage reads: "How is it that Buddhas have neither entered final cessation nor not entered final cessation in the Dharma Body? Here is a stanza: 'Because they are liberated from all obstacles, and since their action is without end, Buddhas both enter final cessation and do not enter final cessation'."[37] Here Asaṅga explains that Buddhas have entered cessation because they have severed all obstacles, but they do not so enter because their worldly action is unending. Thus, for Asaṅga, the eternal action of Buddhas is a mark not of their changeless status, but of their unending phenomenal activity. Moreover, citing not only "the digests," but also the sūtras upon which they depend, Pyysiäinen shows that, in Mahāyāna, language and discursive thinking are guaranteed to lead to illusions about objectivity: "This is the central teaching of the Sūtras of Perfection of Wisdom, that the meaningfulness of language is not dependent on finding objective reference to words. Language is not a picture of reality. It does not reveal reality but veils it" (p. 105). There is here no dichotomy between the world of change and the changeless Buddha. "Only those who have known both unenlightenment and enlightenment, and have transcended this dichotomy are those who have understood. Thus, one must first be able to make this distinction and then, and only then, abandon it" (p. 114). The reason is that the doctrinal summaries present not a static picture of reality, but guidance in a process, whose various stages demand at times affirmation and at times negation. Mahāyāna is a process philosophy of the practice of the middle path between affirmation and negation. Thus the properly Mahāyāna doctrinal study of doctrine is the valid usage of language not to map a metaphysical world, but to state truly the path to and the consequences of awakening. No affirmations about Buddha are valid apart from the teaching of emptiness. Citing Michael Pye,[38] Pyysiäinen writes: "This 'ability to maintain a correct view of the status and role of religious language' is called in the *Prajñāpāramitā* 'skill in means' (*upāyakauśalya*). All such words as 'nirvāṇa', 'Dharma-element' and 'Suchness' are only a 'skillful means' (*upāya*) to express and communicate an experience that is in principle ineffable" (pp. 114–15).

There is no usurpation of the world of human change by the eternal Buddha, for "the mystics have not experienced the world and language as unreal in contradistinction to something real, but as transcending this dichotomy" (p. 116). Thus one should not pose an absolute, unchanging realm over against the changing world at all, but see the identity of both in terms of emptiness and dependent co-arising.[39] Pyysiäinen, unlike Griffiths, makes use of the hermeneutical directions of the Yogācāra texts and thematizes the three aspects of existence (*trisvabhāva*), according to which, far from issuing in a clear metaphysical analysis, "the absolute aspect, in the last resort, transcends even the principle of representation only (*vijñaptimātratā*), and true ontology turns out to be ineffable and within the reach of mystical experience only" (p. 124). There is no available metaphysics on which the analytic mind may sport.[40]

I recommend both books. Griffiths' work presents a tightly argued defense of the propositionalist model of analytic reasoning on Buddhist texts about Buddha, i.e., awakening. Pyysiäinen's work takes a broad phenomenological approach to study that same state of Buddha awakening as mystical experience. They raise issues that are controversial and important.

[37] See *The Summary of the Great Vehicle*, 105.

[38] Michael Pye, *Skillful Means: A Concept in Mahāyāna Buddhism* (London: Duckworth, 1978), 110.

[39] Pyysiäinen, p. 117, cites David Ruegg, *The Literature of the Madhyamaka School of Philosophy in India*, A History of Indian Literature, vol. 7.1 (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1981), 34: "[O]nly silence—a philosophically motivated refraining from the conceptualization and verbalization that belongs to the discursive level of relativity and transactional usage—is considered to correspond in the last analysis to *paramārtha*, which is as such inconceivable and inexpressible in terms of discursivity."

[40] Pyysiäinen seems confused on the issue of the storehouse consciousness in Yogācāra, which in the *Mahāyānasaṃgraha* is clearly a preconscious or unconscious substratum in which the karmic seeds of previous actions germinate into new karmic defilements, and in no way a mystic state. He writes on p. 99 (and similarly on p. 150): "It is, however, difficult to decide whether the *ālayavijñāna* is a purely theoretical concept or whether it refers to a distinct experience. In the latter case it is still unclear whether it refers to a PCE or to an unconscious state."

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REVIEW ARTICLES

ORIGINAL INSIGHTS NEVER FULLY PRESENT: CHAN/ZEN/DECONSTRUCTION*

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Bernard Faure's encyclopedic study of the rhetoric of immediacy and the reality of mediation in the Chan/Zen tradition suffers from lapses and its own rhetorical excesses, but succeeds in conveying the "essential undecidability of Chan," as manifested in deeds and words through the centuries in China and Japan.

LIKE MANY READERS WHO WILL be curious about Bernard Faure's new book, I approach it as a person with a basic knowledge of Chan/Zen Buddhism but not as a scholar of religion; I come to the book also with a specific quest for insights on those who, in literary circles, embraced the aim of Chan, in Faure's words, "to mark the phenomenal world with the seal of the absolute," believing that "in awakening, immanence turns out to be transcendence" (p. 76). That "this equation often came at the expense of transcendental values, and . . . led to legitimating the profane enjoyment of the world of passions" (p. 76) I already knew. One way of understanding this phenomenon is to associate it with changes in the social background of those who participated in Chan through the centuries, notably the Ming merchant classes, who supposedly lost the inner scruples inculcated by the aristocratic mores of Tang and the scholar-official ideals of the Northern Song.[1] But to supplement this kind of historical analysis, Faure's book promises a review of the problem from the inside, using recent strategies for reading texts to analyze the duplicity in the discourse of Chan itself.

The *Rhetoric of Immediacy* heroically attempts to encompass the many centuries of Chan practice and doctrine in three cultures (a Korean voice is heard now and then as we shuttle back and forth between China and Japan). Because of the enormity of the task, a frequently disjointed style of presentation, and a tendency to eliminate the logical or evidential underpinnings to some of the most interesting assertions, the non-specialist is likely to be frustrated on his first pass-through. Nevertheless, there is much here to be learned.

The several types of discourse promised in the prologue—"the hermeneutical and the rhetorical, the structuralist and the historical, the 'theological' and the ideological/cultural"—come into play in the first chapter, "The Differential Tradition." Faure agrees with those who see the division of early Chan into distinct Northern and Southern schools as having been as tactical as it was ideological. He further questions the whole notion of a coherent tradition that can be termed "early Chan." For one thing, the patriarchal tradition envisioned in that notion is logically incompatible with an original Buddhist "path," a stage of the religion in which individuals may become enlightened and thus empower themselves to teach others. At the same time, we need to deconstruct the very notion of that earlier stage as embodying a "pure" Chan principle that is later "corrupted." Not only are there ambiguities and contradictions at every turn: "the 'original' insight . . . may exist only as a [Derridean] 'trace,' something that was never 'present' to a fully awakened consciousness, since there is no self that can actually live the experience" (p. 27). This last clause combines deconstruction and Chan itself to question not only the historical notion of an "originating" teaching, but even the ideological construct of an "originating" experience.

Nowhere is the ambiguity of Chan more apparent than in the dichotomy of sudden and gradual enlightenment, the topic of the second chapter. Faure cautions that this dichotomy is not coterminous with the North-South schism;

* This is a review article of: *The Rhetoric of Immediacy: A Cultural Critique of Chan/Zen Buddhism.* By BERNARD FAURE. Princeton: PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS. 1991. Pp. xiii + 400. $39.50.

[1] See part one of Ge Zhaoguang, *Chanzong yu Zhongguo wenhua* (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin chubanshe, 1991).

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REVIEW ARTICLES

IDEAL TYPES IN INDIAN BUDDHISM: A NEW PARADIGM*

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Reginald Ray's *Buddhist Saints in India* provides not only a welcome addition to scholarly studies on Buddhist hagiography, but also a bold new paradigmatic model concerning the role of the various ideal types in Indian Buddhist history. In so doing, Ray challenges the traditionally accepted two-tiered model of Buddhism, which divided Buddhist practitioners into a monastic saṃgha and a conglomerate of lay members. In its place he offers a threefold model, in which forest renunciants function alongside, and in addition to, the monastic and lay Buddhist communities. It is in its investigation of the role of forest renunciants in the development of Indian Buddhist history that the book makes a brilliant contribution to a proper understanding of Indian Buddhism.

LEST ANYONE THINK THAT MODERN scholarship on Buddhism has not produced a substantial volume of literature devoted to ideal types and hagiography, all he need do is consult Frank Reynolds' useful *Guide to Buddhist Religion* (Boston: G. K. Hall & Co., 1981), where he will find more than thirty pages of listings. In the intervening years, a substantial volume of new literature on the topic has appeared, examining virtually every aspect of the subject. This literature on saints in Buddhism includes studies by nearly all of the great scholarly names in Buddhological research: Bareau, Conze, de Jong, Gombrich, Hirakawa, Horner, Lamotte, La Vallée Poussin, Nagao, Norman, Rhys Davids, Schopen, Snellgrove . . . the list seems endless. Reginald Ray's *Buddhist Saints in India* will shortly take its place among the great studies on this topic, surpassing most of them for its thoroughness of investigation, uniqueness of perspective, and for its fearlessness in taking serious intellectual risks for the sake of new and important knowledge.

That having been said, it is important to recognize that Ray's takeoff point in this volume is the contrary position that *modern scholarship has simply not paid sufficient attention to Indian Buddhist saints*, despite the cognizance of their importance by modern Buddhology. His basis for such a claim is predicated on two primary reasons: "the place of the saints in the Buddhist texts themselves" and "certain modern scholarly presuppositions concerning the saints" (p. 3). In exploring these declarations, Ray begins to wonder whether the Indian Buddhist saints, when examined in their own right, might reveal not only new insights about the development of Indian Buddhist history, but also about the scholarship that investigates it, thus creating a new paradigmatic model.

As he proceeds with his investigation, he adopts six principal themes. The first straightforwardly identifies five major ideal types exemplified by the tradition: *buddha*, *pratyekabuddha*, *arhant*, *bodhisattva*, and *siddha*. Second, he refuses to treat these types as altogether separate from *one another*. Instead, he develops a "single, overarching type," that is congruous in its "basic structure, reveals itself to be relatively consistent from one geographical region to another, across the lines of tradition, and at widely differing time periods" (p. 5). Third, he nonetheless excludes the siddha from this typology, arguing that the siddha is an *especially* distinct type, more different from the other four than they are from one another, the investigation of which is complicated by difficult historical and hermeneutical problems. Fourth, he argues that his typological approach derives from the Indian Buddhist texts themselves, and reflects far more than just scholarly tidiness. As such, this typology mirrors what Indian Buddhists think about their saints. Fifth, in understanding Indian Buddhist saints, a primary structure emerges: "one attains sainthood through the process of divesting oneself of the personal and the individual"

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(p. 6). Finally, the above typology is not without its own internal problems, because many examples can be elucidated that run against type, which can only be clarified by much additional material. Ray is aware that his approach, and its development, raises at least as many questions as it answers; but as this awareness is factored into the overall fabric of the manuscript, it produces much supplementary information that is rich and valuable for Buddhist studies.

Before considering each of the various categories of Indian Buddhist saints, Ray spends substantial time elucidating what Peter Brown, in examining the status of saints in Latin Christianity, has called the "two-tiered model."[1] He does this primarily because he believes that modern Buddhological scholarship has collectively understood Buddhism itself to support the notion of a two-tiered model, with the monk and nun (*bhikṣu, bhikṣuṇī*) occupying the upper tier, while the lay men and women (*upāsaka, upāsikā*) occupy the lower tier. Acknowledging that the supportive evidence is largely Theravādin, Ray nevertheless stresses its applicability to Indian Buddhism in general. Drawing on the summaries of the monastic ideal presented by Étienne Lamotte, Robert Lester, Akira Hirakawa, Jane Bunnag, and Mohan Wijayaratna,[2] he highlights the monastic's progress to nirvāṇa as reflective of two essential pursuits: "the cultivation of pure behavior through adherence to the *vinaya*" and "the study of texts" (pp. 15–16). It is important for what is to be developed later in the volume that Ray also indicates a third preoccupation for the monastic: meditation (and, especially, solitary meditation). Thus he is able to lay the foundation for a thesis suggesting a bifurcated emphasis in the earliest Buddhist tradition, contrasting the settled monastic lifestyle with the solitary life requisite for the development of sainthood. He says this quite directly:

> By its very nature, settled monasticism placed more emphasis on *śīla*, as fulfillment of the *vinaya*, and *prajñā*, defined as knowledge based on learning. At the same time, it placed considerably less emphasis on *samādhi*. Thus, although many classical texts—both Buddhaword and commentaries—recommend meditation as a necessary component of the Buddhist path, in monastic tradition, meditation has remained a primarily theoretical ideal, followed more in the breach than in the observance. Progress in meditation necessitates intensive and sustained practice, and this, in turn, requires seclusion and absence of distraction. (p. 18)

Ray doesn't underestimate the impact of this bifurcation either, citing Edward Conze's well-known remark that "the scholars ousted the saints, and erudition took the place of attainment" (p. 18).[3] Over against this picture of the monastic vocation is contrasted the life of the laity, what Ray calls "the second normative lifestyle" of Indian Buddhism. The layman's chief obligations are to follow the five precepts or *pañcaśīla*, support the monastic community, materially and otherwise, and, if he chooses, to venerate stūpas. Thus, the member of the monastic order proceeds to the attainment of arhantship while the lay member accrues *puṇya*.

Ray believes modern scholars have generally accepted the two-tiered model of Buddhism not only because it reflects the normative textual tradition, but also because, in addition to providing a basic explanation of the precepts of Indian Buddhism, it negotiates an explanation of numerous phenomena (like the worship of stūpas) that do not conform very consistently to a pure and elite monastic style of Buddhism. He concludes about the two-tiered model:

> On the one hand is the Buddhism of the founder, the Buddhism of the monks, marked by renunciation of the world and entry into the monastic *saṃgha*, decorous behavior as defined by compliance with the *vinaya*, the pursuit of the vocation of texts and scholarship, and the goal of nirvāṇa. On the other hand is the Buddhism of the laity, characterized by virtuous behavior and generosity toward monastics as well as by participation in the cults of the stūpa and of local deities. The laity practiced a compromised Buddhism and, in so doing, acted as a kind of buffer between the authentic Buddhism of the monks and the non-Buddhist environment of larger India. (p. 21)

If the two-tiered model developed into a hermeneutic for understanding all of Indian Buddhism, Ray is prepared to argue aggressively that such a model presents a distorted picture, at least with regard to Buddhist saints. His basis for this claim turns, to a large extent, on the theories of Max Weber and Erich Frauwallner. Utilizing Weber's work on Buddha as a charismatic figure, it is not unreasonable to characterize Buddha's initial followers as renunciants who "lived by the relatively unpredictable means of voluntary gifts obtained by alms-seeking, rather than by regularized means of economic support" (p. 24). Nonetheless, with the routinization of charisma, the Buddhist movement became a tradition, and this is where Frauwallner's work on the development of the monastic tradition, as evidenced by what he calls the "*Old Skandhaka*," comes into play. Ray is not unaware of serious criticism of Frauwallner's theories by Lamotte, Heinz Bechert, and Charles Prebish,[4] but he carefully includes only those materials which are most solid and non-controversial. As such, he shows the *Old Skandhaka*, the champion of settled monasticism, in dialogues with an older variety of wandering Buddhism, unwilling to ignore or undermine mendicancy, but clearly making it subordinate to the settled and highly regulated lifestyle of the *vinaya* tradition. In so doing, the charisma of the individual master—what Ray calls "the ultimate reference point" for both individuals and community alike—is lost. In its place is the efficacy of the monastic unit, now responsible for virtually every aspect of the individual life of the bhikṣu, now the new normative unit, consistent with the two-tiered model. And the process by which settled monasticism, and, concomitantly, the vocation of texts and scholarship, ascends to supremacy is cemented by the actual writing down of the Buddhist texts. It is in this context, with the renunciant Buddhism of the forest and its meditational emphasis deemphasized, that Ray proceeds to an examination of the ideal types in Indian Buddhist literature.

The preliminaries having been presented, Ray proceeds to a serial exposition of the variety of saints in the Indian Buddhist tradition, beginning with Buddha Śākyamuni. It is here that Ray presents a comprehensive definition of the saint:

> Most simply put, the saint in Buddhism may be understood as a person in whom the ultimate potentiality of every human, indeed sentient, being has been more or less fully realized. In the Indian Buddhist context, such a realization implies three overlapping and mutually interdependent spheres of religious understanding and action: a characteristic life journey made by the individual from an ordinary human status to saintly perfection; a set of traditional disciplines, including forest renunciation and meditation, that are understood to facilitate this transformation; and a societal dimension, wherein the saint may manifest his or her enlightened charisma and others may respond to it through certain cultic behaviors. (p. 44)

In launching a discussion of Buddha Śākyamuni as the paradigmatic model for a saint, the author divides his life story into two parts: "prerealization," containing eight thematic items, and "postrealization," containing twenty-seven thematic items. Since these items will be the spiritual yardstick against which all other ideal types are measured throughout the volume, it is worth cataloguing them.

Prerealization Items

1. Crisis in the prospective saint's life.
2. Personal spiritual longing which translates into a strong sense of religious vocation.
3. The formal renouncing of the world.
4. The taking up of a particular wandering, renunciant lifestyle, defined by specific ascetic modes of dress, sustenance, and dwelling.
5. The seeking and finding of a teacher or guru.
6. The formulation of aspirations and taking of vows in connection with the quest.
7. The intensive practice of meditation, which makes up the substance of the spiritual quest.
8. Personal realization of enlightenment.

Postrealization items

9. Recognition of the saint's enlightenment.
10. Self-declaration of enlightenment.

[1] Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1981).

[2] See Étienne Lamotte, *Histoire du bouddhisme indien* (Louvain: Publications universitaires, 1958), 58–71; Akira Hirakawa, "The Twofold Structure of the Buddhist Saṅgha," *Journal of the Oriental Institute* 16.3 (1966): 131–37; Robert Lester, *Theravāda Buddhism in Southeast Asia* (Ann Arbor: Ann Arbor Paperbacks [Univ. of Michigan Press], 1973), 48–56, 83–129; Jane Bunnag, *Buddhist Monk, Buddhist Layman: A Study of Urban Monastic Organization in Central Thailand* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1973); and Mohan Wijayaratna, *Buddhist Monastic Life* (New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1990; tr. Claude Grangier and Steven Collins).

[3] Edward Conze "Mahāyāna Buddhism" in *The Concise Encyclopedia of Living Faiths*, ed. R. C. Zaehner (London: Hutchinson, 1959), 116.

[4] See Erich Frauwallner, *The Earliest Vinaya and the Beginnings of Buddhist Literature* (Rome: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1956); but also see Heinz Bechert and Richard Gombrich, eds., *The World of Buddhism: Buddhist Monks and Nuns in Society and Culture* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1984), 79; Lamotte, *Histoire du bouddhisme indien*, 195, and Charles S. Prebish, "Theories Concerning the Skandhaka: An Appraisal," *Journal of Asian Studies* 32 (1973): 669–78.

Compassion identified as a central component in the saint's enlightened personality.
Miraculous phenomena spontaneously surround the saint's person.
Possession of supernatural powers.
The receiving of darśan.
A cult with characteristic features that develops around the saint.
The teaching of others, including not only humans but supernatural beings as well.
The acceptance of close personal disciples and lay followers.
The absence in the saint of scholarly considerations and particularly of textual study.
The communication of teachings in an oral form.
The making of conversions.
The defeat of evil beings.
Association with the lowborn and disadvantaged.
The unconventionality of the saint and his or her critique of social and religious conventions.
The saint criticized and even persecuted for his or her sanctity, unconventionality, or explicit critiques.
The danger of the numinous power of the saint.
The saint as principal reference point of the dharma for his or her followers.
Possession of a body that is supramundane in some way.
Possession of the power of longevity and the capacity to live even to the end of a kalpa.
Association of the saint with millennial expectations.
Anticipation of death.
Extraordinary death.
Ritual disposition of the body of the saint, usually by cremation.
The saint's remains enshrined, usually in a stūpa.
The association of the saint with one or more sacred places.
The development of characteristic kinds of texts, in particular, sacred biography and "sayings" or "songs" of the saint.

ch of these thematic items, textual data, almost exly drawn from the *Buddhacarita*, are presented ecific reference to Buddha Śākyamuni. Of course, tical question is obvious, and Ray asks it directly: closely does this 'paradigmatic Buddha' correspond actual 'Buddha of history'" (p. 61)? He offers his sions immediately thereafter:

> Thus we arrive at the seemingly ironic position of affirming that we likely come closest to the historical Buddha precisely when we take the legendary and cultic idiom of this hagiographical tradition most seriously. (p. 62)

That Ray's conclusion is largely based on the *Buddhacarita* is no obstacle, for he finds the same basic themes in the Pāli *Suttanipāta*, identified by Lamotte and Luis Gómez,[5] for example, as among the earliest Buddhist texts. Importantly too, both the *Buddhacarita* and the *Suttanipāta* seem to understand Buddha as a *person of the forest*. From the above, with some additional input on the nature of the *śramaṇa* lifestyle from Romila Thapar's innovative 1978 article, "Renunciation: The Making of a Counter-Culture?"[6] Ray seems persuaded that the

> Buddha was indeed a saint of the forest whose earliest disciples were forest renunciants and who espoused a dharma essentially of forest renunciation. This is not, of course, to rule out the possibility that town-and-village renunciation figured in some way in the very early tradition. (p. 67)

No doubt, according to Ray, the town-and-village renunciation that was the basis of classical Buddhist monasticism must have developed within a few generations after Buddha's death.

Having developed the archetypal model of the saint, on which the rest of the volume depends, Ray proceeds to apply the model in four successive chapters, to "Saints of the *Theragāthā* and *Therīgāthā*," "Some Orthodox Saints in Buddhism," "Saints Criticized and Condemned," and "Cults of Arhants." He begins with the *Theragāthā* and *Therīgāthā* because he believes, primarily based on K. R. Norman's 1969 introduction to and translation of the *Theragāthā*,[7] that these texts are among the very earliest Buddhist texts, with portions being especially ancient. Although this first chapter on the *bhikkhu* and *bhikkhuṇī* saints of the early tradition is short, it nonetheless emphasizes the theme which dominates Ray's volume: that these saints were forest renunciants whose lifestyle does "not reflect settled monastic values and orientations and, in fact, stand in considerable contrast to the classical type of monk" (p. 96). This theme continues in the next chapter which focuses on the figures of Mahākāśyapa, Upagupta, and Śāriputra. In his explication of these three early disciples of Buddha, he is able to consult a wider literature than that pre-

[5] See Lamotte, *Histoire du bouddhisme indien*, 172–74, and Luis Gómez, "Proto-Mādhyamika in the Pāli Canon," *Philosophy East and West* 26 (1976): 139–40.

[6] In Romila Thapar, *Ancient Indian Social History: Some Interpretations* (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1978), 63–104.

[7] K. R. Norman, tr., *The Elders' Verses*, I: *Theragāthā*, The Pāli Text Society Translation Series, 35 (London: The Pāli Text Society, 1969).

served in Pāli, including such primary texts as the *Mahāvastu*, Mūlasarvāstivādin *Vinaya*, *Divyāvadāna*, and others. He also makes valuable use of John Strong's important volume, *Legend and Cult of Upagupta*.[8] What he finds in comparing the Pāli and Sanskritic traditions is important, too:

> If we take Mahākāśyapa's hagiography as a reflection of larger historical trends and attitudes, it appears that within the Sanskrit Buddhism, established tradition viewed forest Buddhist and settled monasticism as compatible elements within a larger whole, standing in generally harmonious relation to one another. (p. 137)

The Pāli tradition, however, presents more contrasts and tensions, more unresolved issues concerning Mahākāśyapa. He goes on to say that

> The contrast between these two different ways . . . of viewing the relation of settled monastic and forest Buddhism evident in Mahākāśyapa's personality is even more striking when one compares the two other saints discussed in this chapter, Upagupta and Śāriputra. (p. 137)

For Ray, Upagupta becomes the prototypic saint of Northwestern (Indian) Buddhism while Śāriputra fulfills the identical role for Southern (Indian) Buddhism. In making these determinations, he draws heavily on André Migot's "Un grand disciple du Buddha: Śāriputra."[9]

In moving ahead to saints who were criticized and/or condemned, the figures change but not the conclusion. Ray's example of a criticized saint is Piṇḍolabhāradvāja. His hagiography is followed in several *Vinayas* (most notably the Theravādin, Dharmaguptaka, Sarvāstivādin, and Mahīśāsaka) as well as in the *Divyāvadāna* and other texts. Again he emphasizes his key point:

> Moreover, in Piṇḍola and in those who would criticize him, are reflected the two historical trends of early Buddhism, namely, forest Buddhism and the more collective ideal of monasticism as presented in the *vinayas*. On the one side is Piṇḍola, the forest renunciant, for whom asceticism, intensive meditation, attainment, and magical powers are the norm. On the other is the monastic renunciant here defined by a communal lifestyle of behavioral purity. (p. 159)

As the settled, monastic lifestyle begins to take precedence, Piṇḍola's sanctity is never questioned, but his exhibition of magical powers is subordinated, and when he does something blameworthy, he is castigated. From the perspective of the *vinaya* tradition, Piṇḍola's saintly manifestations, those items which are reminders of links to his forest renunciant status, are construed as indicative of spiritual relapse. The case of Devadatta is similar, and Ray finds numerous examples of his saintliness (such as that of the *Udāna* and *Aṅguttara Nikāya*), thus suggesting that the picture of Devadatta, purely as evildoer, is inconsistent. In developing his discussion of the Devadatta legend, Ray mines heavily from Biswabed Mukerjee's important *Die Überlieferung von Devadatta, dem Widersacher des Buddha, in den kanonischen Schriften*[10] and André Bareau's "Étude du bouddhisme,"[11] as well the *Saṃghabhedavastus* and *Vibhaṅgas* of the Theravādin, Dharmaguptaka, Mahīśāsaka, Sarvāstivādin, and Mūlasarvāstivādin *Vinayas*. He focuses on fifteen critical episodes in the story, believed to represent the oldest stratum of the Devadatta legend. In a thorough, detailed discussion of these episodes in all the sources, it appears that the only point on which all the *Vinayas* agree is that Devadatta was a "virtuous, 'rigorist' *bhikṣu*" (p. 170). Bareau's remark, "the desire to condemn Devadatta and to make him completely odious is too clear for one to have confidence in this new portrait, which is nothing but pure calumny,"[12] is most compelling. Ray puts the pieces together in this fashion:

> This conclusion raises an important question: what is it about Devadatta that sets his Buddhist attackers on such a literary rampage? It is significant that Devadatta, in the earliest stage of his legend, is a forest saint in the classical mold. . . . Devadatta is not only a forest saint but one who strongly advocates forest Buddhism as the only authentic type of Buddhist renunciation, seen in his proposing the *dhutaguṇa*-type practices as obligatory for all renunciants. His unwavering advocacy of forest Buddhism is also seen in the issue of leadership. . . . Devadatta feels that the true dharma is to be found solely and strictly in the forest, and he appeals to Buddha to back him up. . . . This explanation is confirmed when we notice that his attackers are, among the Buddhists, precisely those most identified with settled monasticism. . . . It seems clear that the core of the Devadatta legend, and particularly the vitriolic nature of the condemnation

[8] John Strong, *Legend and Cult of Upagupta* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1992).

[9] *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 46 (1954): 405–554.

[10] Munich: Munchener Studien zur Sprachwissenschaft, 1966.

[11] *Annuaire du Collège de France* (1988–1989): 533–47.

[12] Ibid., 542.

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> of this saint, is best understood as the expression of a controversy between a proponent (and his tradition) of forest Buddhism and the proponents of settled monasticism, a controversy that in the sources is seen from the viewpoint of the monastic side. (pp. 170–72)

The final chapter in this series of four focuses on the cults of arhants. Here Ray explores the tradition of sixteen great arhants, mentioned in a variety of Indian Buddhist texts that have been translated into Chinese (and, most importantly, the *Nandimitrāvadāna*). Of course, he finds particularly interesting that part of the tradition that identifies the habitat of these sixteen figures such that he can refer to them as the "quintessential forest saints" (p.180). He goes on to document the discussion of these sixteen arhants in the writings of the Chinese Buddhist pilgrims Fa-hsien and Hsüan-tsang, who visited India between 399–412 and 627–45, respectively (according to Ray). From the above, and with acknowledgment of some degree of uncertainty, Ray suggests five stages in the development of the term *arhant* within Buddhism. These include:

1. In pre-Buddhist times, the designation for one worthy of merit;
2. In early Buddhism, the designation for a liberated saint (including Buddha, pratyekabuddhas, and disciples);
3. After Buddha's death, the designation for past and presently living saints;
4. Later, but still early in the Buddhist tradition, the term expands to *two possible meanings*, one indicative of attainment by the meditative path, and the other signifying a non-meditative path;
5. Eventually, the term becomes monasticized, diminishing the charisma of the saint.

Chapter seven moves away from that collective group of saints who could be called arhants, and examines the figure of the *pratyekabuddha*, identified by Ray as a "solitary saint." At the outset of the chapter Ray rehearses the traditional image of the pratyekabuddha, first in the traditional Pāli texts cited by Kloppenborg[13] and Wiltshire,[14] in their landmark studies, along with the additional findings of La Vallée Poussin, Nalinaksha Dutt, Fujita, de Jong, Gombrich, and Norman;[15] and, second, with reference to the Mahāyāna literature that tends to see the pratyekabuddha and śrāvaka as members of the same vehicle. All of these characterizations, as noted by Ray, are "abstract, stereotyped, and repetitive" (pp. 213–14) and portray the pratyekabuddha as someone superior to an arhant although lesser in attainment than a Buddha, and *clearly not as an actual, living saint*. Against this backdrop, an alternative vision is suggested by the author, based *not* on the above texts, but on what he claims is a rich hagiographical tradition pertinent to the pratyekabuddha that includes primarily the Pāli *Jātakas*, *Apadāna*, commentary on the *Suttanipāta*, *Khaggavisāṇa* and *Isigili Suttas* as well as the Sanskrit *Avadānaśataka*, *Divyāvadāna*, and *Mahāvastu*. More importantly, this alternative vision clearly interprets the figure of the pratyekabuddha as a realized saint. Following a careful exegesis of the textual materials in support of his claim, Ray completes his chapter by concluding that the pratyekabuddha is a forest saint (as evidenced by his *pravrajyā* ceremony which differs uniquely from the traditional *pravrajyā*, and is followed immediately by solitary wandering in the forest); that the pratyekabuddha has a real historical status (contrary to the suggestion of Winston King[16]); and that the pratyekabuddha is "a Buddhist saint of the highest order" (p. 235), and not a non-Buddhist phenomenon, as La Vallée Poussin and Kloppenborg have argued. To explain how the stereotyped image of the pratyekabuddha emerged, Ray says:

> The commentators clearly developed a stereotype of the pratyekabuddha that did not always fit the facts as expressed in the more legendary evidence. At the same time, they stayed close enough to the facts of the pratyekabuddha as a solitary forest saint to remain credible. . . . The evidence in the commentaries reflects a process of monasticization in which the monastic and particularly the monastic commentarial traditions have assimilated the pratyekabuddha, retaining something of his charisma but reducing him so that the figure he presents is harmonious rather than at odds with Buddhism as then understood. As we have seen, the pratyekabuddha himself reflects an ideal of forest renunciation that is perhaps close indeed to the ideals of the Buddha and earliest Buddhism. (pp. 240–41)

[13] Ria Kloppenborg, *The Paccekabuddha, A Buddhist Ascetic* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1974).

[14] Martin Wiltshire, *Ascetic Figures Before and in Early Buddhism: The Emergence of Gautama as the Buddha* (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1990).

[15] See Louis de La Vallée Poussin, "The Pratyekabuddha," in *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, ed. James Hastings (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908–1927), 10:152–54; Nalinaksha Dutt, *Aspects of Mahāyāna Buddhism and Its Relation to Hīnayāna* (London: Luzac & Co., 1930), 80ff.; Kotatsu Fujita, "One Vehicle or Three," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 3 (1975): 79–166; J. W. de Jong, Review of Kloppenborg, *Indo-Iranian Journal* 17 (1976): 322–24; Richard Gombrich, Review of Kloppenborg, *Orientalistische Literaturzeitung* 74 (1979): 78–80; and K. R. Norman, "The Pratyeka-buddha in Buddhism and Jainism," in *Buddhist Studies: Ancient and Modern*, ed. Philip Denwood and Alexander Piatigorsky (London: Curzon Press, 1983), 92–106.

[16] See Winston King, *Theravāda Meditation: The Buddhist Transformation of Yoga* (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State Univ. Press, 1980), 235.

The last individual type to be considered is the *bodhisattva*, and especially the bodhisattva saints of the forest as depicted in the Mahāyāna sūtras. It is the subject of chapter eight. Ray's supposition is that the early Mahāyāna texts frequently stress the "unique normativity" (p. 251) of the forest bodhisattva as contrasted to the city or monastery bodhisattva. Reconciling the apparent contradiction of a presumably worldly and compassionate bodhisattva who retires from the world to a solitary, meditative life in a forest hermitage is a formidable task, but our author is clearly up to it, first showing that the "contradiction is only apparent" (p. 251) and then building an impressive series of citations from Mahāyāna texts that emphasize the bodhisattva as a forest saint.

Ray quotes from Lamotte's translation of the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā Śāstra*:[17]

> Question: For the Bodhisattva, the rule is to save all sentient beings. Why does he seclude himself in the forests and fens, solitude and mountains, preoccupied with only himself, thus abandoning beings?
>
> Answer: Although the bodhisattva is physically secluded from others, his mind never abandons them. In his solitary retreat (*śāntavihāra*), he practices meditation (*samādhi*) and gains true wisdom in order to save others. It is like when taking medicine for the body, one temporarily interrupts his household duties. Then, when one's health is restored, one again takes up one's duties as before.

He then goes on to chronicle forest bodhisattva references from the *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, *Ugraparipṛcchā Sūtra*, *Candrapradīpa Sūtra*, *Ratnakūṭa Sūtra*, and *Rāṣṭrapālapariprcchā Sūtra*. More importantly, he focuses on the *Ratnaguṇasaṃcayagāthā*, noting that while this early Mahāyāna text cites both the renunciant bodhisattva and lay bodhisattva as valid ideals, the renunciant, yogin bodhisattva is considered the higher, ideal vocation. Ray extends the argument a bit as well. He points out that while the *Ratnaguṇasaṃcayagāthā* does not comment on the merits and values of settled monasticism, it does criticize some śrāvakas in a fashion that convinces Ray that they are probably settled monastic dwellers. And although there is certainly basis for ambiguity in his conclusion (which Ray acknowledges), by association, it is possible to infer that the lifestyle of these śrāvakas represents the wrong path.

Ray concludes this chapter by addressing the common theme of forest renunciation that has dominated the previous chapters, noting the similarities in lifestyle, preoccupaiton, and attainment, but also emphasizing the differences between the Mahāyāna practitioner and his Nikāya counterpart. Most obviously, the forest renunciant is not referred to as an arhant or a pratyekabuddha, but rather as bodhisattva, seeking complete perfect enlightenment. Second, the element of compassion is more explicitly emphasized in the tradition surrounding the renunciant bodhisattva. Thirdly, as a concomitant of the above, the bodhisattva's attainment represents not the final spiritual realization, but only that which is preliminary to the attainment of Buddahood. Finally, and apparently most interesting to Ray, is the way in which the Nikāya adept and renunciant bodhisattva present attitudinally nuanced understandings of language. Without ignoring the argument for such notions as "proto-Mādhyamika" in the Pāli Canon (as presented primarily by Luis Gómez; see note 5 above), Ray notes that

> [t]he centrality of the teaching of *śūnyatā* within the early forest Mahāyāna enables a kind of sustained flexibility and absence of dogmatism that, even among Buddhist forest traditions, is particularly striking. . . . This kind of nondogmatism and flexibility clearly opened up the possibility of translating the essential realization of forest Buddhism, *śūnyatā*, as termed in the texts examined here, into any number of other environments and external forms. (p. 272)

Having concluded his discussion of the various terms for ideal types in the early Indian Buddhist tradition, Ray presents several chapters addressing the development of the cult that developed around these types.

Since the first eight chapters of the study consider the hagiographic paradigms of Buddhist saints and the cults surrounding them, Ray now addresses a third major factor in his consideration of ideal types: the ascetic traditions practiced by the saints. He is quick to point out that Śākyamuni himself emerged from the ascetic tradition of forest renunciation, as did Mahākāśyapa, Upagupta, Piṇḍolabhāradvāja, Devadatta, and even Śāriputra. Moreover, the saints whose verses are captured in the *Theragāthā* and *Therigāthā* were forest dwellers, as were many of the arhants mentioned by the various Chinese pilgrims who visited India.

[17] Étienne Lamotte, tr., *Le Traité de la grande vertu de sagesse (Mahāprajñāpāramitā Śāstra)*, 5 vols. (Louvain: Bureaux du Muséon, 1944–1980), 984.

/hile briefly treating the well-known four *niśrayas* of y Buddhism (*vṛkṣamūla*, living at the foot of a tree; *lapāta*, living by begging food; *pāṃśukūla*, wearing hes made from thrown away rags; *pūtimuktabhaiṣa-* using only cow's urine as medicine), and their simi- counterparts scattered elsewhere in the scriptures h as a quite similar list of four requisites in the *ha Nikāya*), he focuses primarily on the well-known of ascetic practices known as *dhūtaguṇas* (usually ve in Sanskrit and thirteen in Pāli). For Ray, they n to constitute one of the singularly defining charristics of the forest renunciant. He points out that are also a substantial component of the practice he Buddhist saints mentioned immediately above, ht by Buddha himself, and that Mahākāśyapa is re- d to as the foremost of the *dhūtaguṇins*.

is not just the early Nikāya texts that emphasize *dhūtaguṇas* either. Numerous references are drawn n Mahāyāna texts, such as the *Ratnaguṇasaṃcaya- ā* and *Raṣṭrapāla Sūtra*, or the *Mahāprajñāpāra- Śāstra* and *Samādhirāja Sūtra*, which associate the *aguṇas* with pure *śīla* for the forest renunciant. / can also be identified as normative practices in the *āvastu*, *Divyāvadāna*, *Kāśyapaparivarta*, *Śikṣāsa- :aya*, and a host of other texts from both the Mahā- and Nikāya literature. The Mahāyāna and Nikāya dhist lists are nearly identical, too, as Ray indicates omparing the Pāli list, as found in the *Parivāra* (as xample of a canonical version) and *Milindapañha* an example of an extracanonical text), with that d in the *Mahāvyutpatti*. Ray even shows how ely the list of seventeen ascetic practices found in *Aṣṭasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā Sūtra* parallels the list *hūtaguṇas*. The rest of the chapter is devoted to onstrating how the *dhūtaguṇas* functioned for issa, Buddhaghosa, Devadatta, and the saints of the *agāthā* and *Therīgāthā*. Lest the importance of the s raised by the *niśrayas* and *dhūtaguṇas* be under- nated, a forthcoming article suggests that it was pre- y these issues that figured prominently in the initial rian division that separated the Mahāsāṃghikas Sthaviras.[18]

om all the evidence collected, Ray offers a hypo- cal developmental sequence for the ascetic prac- in Buddhism (quoted from pp. 315–16):

> The four *niśrayas* define an early normative form of forest Buddhism. Moreover, they leave their influence on later times, for their threefold concern for begging of food, apparel, and habitation will provide the underlying structure of the later *dhutaguṇa* [sic] lists. These *niśrayas* precede the division into what later come to be understood as Nikāya and Mahāyāna Buddhism. In any case, the *niśrayas* are not universally definitive of forest Buddhism; as we have seen, other simple lists of forest practices within Buddhism are also known.
>
> 2) Devadatta's "schism" occurs, with its rigorist interpretation of the *dhutaguṇas*, stricter than that evidenced by any other known tradition of forest Buddhism.
>
> 3) At perhaps roughly the same time, the more conventional codes of forest Buddhism are in development, with each of the *niśraya* categories being expressed in larger but still loose groupings, containing perhaps some of, perhaps all the rules that the different traditions share, perhaps along with some others. This development occurs as common ground of forest traditions later understood as Nikāya and Mahāyānist and precedes the split that this terminology reflects.
>
> 4) This leads to some early, unsystematized versions of what later become the classical *dhutaguṇas*, such as those of the *Theragāthā* and *Aṣṭasāhasrikāprajñā- pāramitā Sūtra*, without evident connection to the life of the settled monastery.
>
> 5) Upatissa's basic text, exclusive of the exceptions given at its end, also generally reflects a nonmonastic content. At the same time, in relation to the larger and looser lists of the *Theragāthā* and *Aṣṭasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā Sūtra*, Upatissa's list represents, as noted, a reduction and concretizing of the list.
>
> 6) The set of *dhutaguṇas* is monasticized, a process reflected in Upatissa's text in its final form and in the *Visuddhimagga* of Buddhaghosa. This development need not have occurred after those enumerated above but could have occurred at a very early time, with town-and-village renunciants or perhaps even settled monasticism proper having had a version of *dhutaguṇa*-type practices, seen as temporary (and relatively permissive) modifications of this kind of renunciation.
>
> 7) Later Mahāyāna lists of *dhutaguṇas* (*Mahāvyutpatti* and *Dharmasaṃgraha*) appear to reflect a similar process of the monasticization of the *dhutaguṇas*.

It is important to understand why Ray goes to so much trouble to present this developmental theory when such earlier scholars as T. W. Rhys Davids, Jean Przyluski, Har Dayal, and Michael Carrithers have all argued that the *dhūtaguṇas* seem to be at variance with traditional Buddhist practices.[19] Such a position, he argues, is based on what he believes is a false assumption: "that settled monasticism, as defined by the final form of the *vinaya*, constitutes normative Buddhism from its earliest times, rather than on an examination of the *dhutaguṇas*, themselves, and the texts in which they appear" (p. 317). In addition, the monastic viewpoint fails to explain why, if the *niśrayas* and *dhūtaguṇas* were so instrumental in textual resources for defining the lifestyle of the *early* Buddhist renunciant, they were deemed to be a late addition to the tradition. The monastic position never explains why Buddha, who presumably attained his realization while living in the forest and practicing a life based on meditation and on practices similar to the *dhūtaguṇas*, would teach something entirely different to his earliest disciples. Further, the monastic viewpoint fails to explain why the *dhūtaguṇa* practices, if so peripheral to Buddhism, permeate all periods of Indian Buddhist history. Ray goes on to say:

> Surely a much more logical explanation of the presence of the *dhutaguṇa*-oriented traditions within Indian Buddhism is that they formed a central focus of Buddhism in its earliest days and were pushed to the side (at least in the evidence) only later, by the development and rise to dominance of settled monasticism. . . . This view permits a simpler and more logical explanation for the relative absence of the *dhutaguṇas* in the Pali canon. The monastically oriented compilers of the Pāli canon, as we have it, simply did not consider the *dhutaguṇas* sufficiently important to their kind of Buddhism to merit discussion. (p. 317)

Ray's dismantling of traditional notions regarding the so-called ascetic practices of Buddhism raises perhaps more questions than it answers, some of which are examined in the ensuing chapters.

Since so much of Ray's focus in what has preceded has concentrated on the hagiographies of living saints, in the tenth chapter he considers the role of the *stūpa* in the Indian Buddhist cult of saints, attempting to demonstrate that stūpas are just "as characteristic of other Indian Buddhist saints as they are of the Buddha" (p. 324). He draws, of course, on the classic research of Bareau[20] and Lamotte, as well as on de Visser's accounts of Chinese pilgrims in medieval India,[21] but also on Schopen's recent, persuasive "hypothesis that 'the relic cult and stūpa of the historical Buddha only represents a special and particularly well known instance' of a general set of beliefs and practices surrounding saints within Indian Buddhism"[22] (p. 325).

In succession, stūpa symbolism, the purpose of the stūpa and its cult, conventions governing respect for stūpas, ritual elements in the stūpa cult, participants in the stūpa cult, and modalities and parallels of the stūpa are considered. By far the most important of these issues for Ray's eventual thesis is a consideration of the participants in the stūpa cult. These participants are threefold: the laity, monks and nuns, and forest renunciants. To be sure, the role of the laity is least troublesome to the main thesis of the book, and is dispatched with a quick reference to the *Avalokita Sūtra*, praising the benefits derived from stūpa worship. The role of the monastic participants is more difficult to develop, primarily because the two-tiered model cited earlier suggests that they do not participate in stūpa worship, but Ray utilizes André Bareau's compelling 1962 article, "La construction et la culte des stūpa d'après les vinayapiṭaka" (see note 20), to demonstrate quite convincingly that this was not the case with respect to the non-Pāli Nikāya traditions. More recently, Bareau's work has been supported by Schopen.

In the Pāli tradition, however, it has long been contended that members of the monastic orders were not permitted to participate actively in the stūpa cult. This contention is grounded on two basic issues: that the *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta* expressly prohibits such worship; and, while the *Vinayas* of the various other schools contain regulation governing the behavior of monks at stūpas, these or similar references are totally lacking in the Pāli *Vinaya*. Again, Schopen provides what appears to Ray to be a reasonable resolution of the problem. In a 1991 article, entitled "Monks and the Relic Cult in the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta: An Old Misunderstanding in Regard to Monastic Buddhism,"[23] Schopen argues that the prohibition in the *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta* is nothing more than a misreading of the passage in question. On the

See Charles S. Prebish, "Śaikṣa-dharmas Revisited: Further iderations of Mahāsāṃghika Origins," *History of Religions* coming).

[19] See T. W. Rhys Davids, tr., *The Questions of King Milinda*, 2 vols. (rpt.; Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1965), 2:268 (n. 1); Jean Przyluski, *Le Concile de Rājagṛha* (Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1926–28), 292; Har Dayal, *The Bodhisattva Doctrine in Buddhist Sanskrit Literature* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1932), 137–38; and Michael Carrithers, *The Forest Monks of Sri Lanka: An Anthropological and Historical Study* (Delhi: Oxford Univ. Press, 1983), 62–63.

[20] André Bareau, "La construction et le culte des stūpa d'après les vinayapiṭaka," *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 50 (1962): 229–74.

[21] M. W. de Visser, *The Arhants in China and Japan* (Berlin: 1922–1923).

[22] Gregory Schopen, "An Old Inscription from Amarāvatī and the Cult of the Local Monastic Dead in Indian Buddhist Monasteries," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 14.2 (1991): 281–329.

[23] In *From Benaras to Beijing: Essays on Buddhism and Chinese Religion in Honor of Jan Yün-Hua*, ed. Gregory Schopen and Koichi Shinohara (Oakville, Ontario: Mosaic, 1991), 187–210.

Vinaya issue, Schopen asserts that the Pāli *Vinaya originally* contained the rules in question, but that they were either inadvertently or intentionally omitted from the canonical tradition.[24] This conclusion would thus bring the Pāli tradition in line with those of the other Nikāya sects. Unfortunately, Schopen's conclusion has been aggressively and convincingly attacked by Oscar von Hinüber (in "Khandhakavatta: Loss of Text in the Pāli Vinayapiṭaka?"), Richard Gombrich (in "Making Mountains Without Molehills: The Case of the Missing Stūpa), Charles Hallisey (in "Apropos the Pāli Vinaya as a Historical Document: A Reply to Gregory Schopen"),[25] and this detracts considerably from the strength of Ray's argument on this point.

In considering forest renunciants, Ray centers almost exclusively on the figure of the renunciant bodhisattva. In developing this position, one that links the forest saints of early Mahāyāna to the cult of the stūpa, he cites Hirakawa's brilliant article, "The Rise of Mahāyāna Buddhism and Its Relationship to the Worship of Stūpas,"[26] almost continuously. The argument is succinctly summarized:

> Hirakawa proposes a theory—novel at the time—of the origins of the Mahāyāna. Hirakawa draws our attention to the figure of the "renunciant bodhisattva," the bodhisattva who is not a lay-person, but who has renounced the world. Particularly important in the present context, this renunciant bodhisattva is also not a monastic, has not taken the monastic *pravrajyā* or full ordination (*upasampadā*), and does not follow the monastic *prātimokṣa*. Having no evident connection to the monastery, this bodhisattva lives elsewhere and engages in activities that are very different from those of the monastic. In certain early Mahāyāna texts, Hirakawa tells us, a contrast is continually drawn up between the *śrāvakasaṃgha* (the monastic order) and the *bodhisattvagaṇa* (group or community) of bodhisattvas. It is the *bodhisattvagaṇa* to which the Mahāyāna *sūtras* are addressed, and this Mahāyāna community is made up of the sons of good family (*kulaputra*) and daughters of good family (*kuladuhitṛ*), understood as bodhisattvas." (p. 340)

Hirakawa goes on to point out that when renunciant bodhisattvas leave the world, they are ordained into a bodhisattva *śīla* (called "ten virtuous actions" or *daśakuśalakarmapatha*) which is clearly *not parallel* to the *śīla* of the bhikṣu in Nikāya Buddhism. They do this through accepting a *bodhisattvaprātimokṣa* and a *bodhisattvakarmavācanā* which is also *not parallel* to the *pravrajyā* and *upasampadā* of the bhikṣu. Since these renunciant bodhisattvas did not live a monastic life, Hirakawa points out that the earliest Mahāyāna literature identified two primary residences for these individuals: forest retreats (*āraṇyāyatana*) when they practiced austerities and meditation, and stūpas when they studied sūtras or became ill. Later, in an article entitled "Stūpa Worship,"[27] Hirakawa suggests that stūpas became the religious centers for renunciant bodhisattvas. Ray concludes from the above that "Hirakawa's work, then, parallels some of the major themes of this study. These include the paradigm of the Buddhist saint as a renunciant who emulates the Buddha; the following of a way of life defined by forest asceticism and meditation in seclusion; and the importance of the cult of the stūpa" (p. 343). Thus, the stūpa provided the institutional focus for Buddhist forest renunciants of all types.

Before moving on to the final two chapters, in which Ray examines the process of monasticization and sets forth his creative suggestion of a threefold model, he first examines the tension between two normative reference points in Buddhism: one provided by the Buddhist saints of the forest, and one that focuses elsewhere . . . on the values of settled monastic life. The values of settled monastic life are best represented by what Ray refers to as the "doctrine of absence," reflected primarily in the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*. While first noting that the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* acknowledges the legitimacy of building stūpas in honor of tathāgatas, arhants, and pratyekabuddhas, Ray suggests here, following Schopen, that while laypeople are permitted to participate in the veneration of the stūpas in general (*sarīrapūjā*), not all monastics are allowed to engage in this practice.[28] Utilizing Bareau's extensive studies of the various versions of the text,[29] Ray concludes:

[24] Gregory Schopen, "The Stūpa Cult and the Extant Pāli Vinaya," *Journal of the Pāli Text Society* 13 (1989): 83–100.

[25] All articles in the 1990 *Journal of the Pāli Text Society* (and *not* in the 1991 issue, as Ray cites).

[26] This was published in English in 1963 in *Memoires of the Research Department of Toyo Bunkyo*.

[27] See Mircea Eliade, ed., *Encyclopedia of Religion* (New York: Macmillan, 1987), 14: 92–96.

[28] It is not altogether clear, however, which monastics are not permitted to worship at stūpas. It is possible to infer, as Ray seems to, that non-realized monastics are prohibited from this practice while arhants are not. In citing the acceptability of Mahākāśyapa's stūpa worship, he ponders whether this detail is intended to suggest that realized saints are allowed to venerate a stūpa or whether very senior monks are afforded the privilege.

[29] These studies include his 1962 article (cited earlier), "La construction et le culte des stūpa d'après les vinayapiṭaka," but also *Recherches sur la biographie du Buddha dans les Sūtrapiṭaka et les Vinayapiṭaka anciens*, 1: *Da la quête de l'eveil à la conversion de Śāriputra et de Maudgalyāyana* (Paris: École française d'Extrême-Orient, 1963); *Recherches sur la biographie du Buddha dans les Sūtrapiṭaka et les Vinayapiṭaka anciens*, 2: *Les derniers mois, le parinirvāṇa et les funérailles* (Paris: École française d'Extrême-Orient, 1970–71); "Le parinirvāṇa du Buddha et la naissance de la religion bouddhique," *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 61 (1974): 275–99; "Les récits canoniques des funérailles du Buddha et leurs anomalies: Nouvel essai d'interprétation," *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 61 (1975): 151–89; and "La composition et les étapes de la formation progressive du Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra ancien," *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 66 (1979): 45–103.

[30] Hirakawa, "Stūpa Worship," 93.

> In fact, it appears that in the text the cult of saints has been to some extent rendered superfluous, in two respects. First, the Buddha seems to function implicitly as the saint who renders any other saints unnecessary; since he has come, there is now no further need for other saints. Second, owing to the monastic legacy that the Buddha has left behind, even he himself is no longer necessary, and his death can be viewed with equanimity. (pp. 363–64)

This position is amplified by the evidence of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* itself, which explicitly states that in the Tathāgata's absence, the religious community will be sufficiently maintained by the *dharma* and *vinaya*. In other words, "The *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* has removed the living saint as a primary reference point for its religious life and in his place installed settled monasticism" (p. 364).

Despite the above, Indian Buddhism offers another position with regard to saints, referred to as a "doctrine of presence or immanence" by the author, felt to reflect a logical and consistent position. Employing Hirakawa's suggestion that "the people who worshipped at Buddhist stūpas seem to have believed that the Buddha continued to be active,"[30] the ongoing presence of the saints can be linked to the traditional Buddhist theme of compassion for sentient beings. What follows in chapter eleven is a lengthy and interesting discussion of *nirodhasamāpatti* (the so-called "attainment of cessation"), a comparison of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* and the *Nandimitrāvadāna*, and an exegesis of Stanislaw Schayer's notions about precanonical Buddhism. These items are interwoven so as to postulate an alternative to the doctrine of absence noted above. The discussion of *nirodhasamāpatti* emphasizes *not only* its recognition as the highest, culminating, meditative state, but also its association with forest saints and as a state *mistakenly* thought of as death. This is a critical acknowledgment, for

> [t]he linkage of *nirodhasamāpatti* with the forest saints is particularly important, for it provides Buddhism with a physical location of nirvāṇa in this world—namely, in the body of the saint, whether it be the body of flesh and blood, stūpa, or another icon. In *nirodhasamāpatti*, the saint remains present and can even be said to have a kind of life, but it is utterly different from the existence of ordinary people. . . . In this sense, it may be mistaken for death by those who are not discerning . . . a theme found with some frequency in the Nikāya literature. (p. 371)

The *Nandimitrāvadāna* is discussed because it contains a passage closely allied to the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* account wherein the Buddha announces his forthcoming death—although in the former text, it is the saint Nandimitra and not the Buddha who is about to pass away. When Nandimitra's disciples ask how long the *dharma* will prevail, they get a response altogether different from that of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*. Instead of referring his disciples to the *dharma* and *vinaya*, Nandimitra lectures on the ongoing existence of a group known as the sixteen arhants, thus soothing the disciples' grief somewhat by emphasizing the continuation of a group of enlightened saints who remain to provide spiritual assistance. In other words, in its emphasis on the immanence of saints, the *Nandimitrāvadāna*, curiously, takes a position opposed to the more traditional and dominant *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* and its doctrine of absence.

To resolve the matter of why these passages, and others which Ray has deftly uncovered in the course of his inquiry, differ so dramatically from one another, Schayer's landmark work on precanonical Buddhism is explored in quite a new way. Schayer's bold work presumed that if we are ever to uncover the long sought after "precanonical Buddhism," it will likely be revealed by searching the earliest texts for doctrinal standpoints contrary to the established norm of the early canon. In trying to understand why the heterodox viewpoints were not simply edited out of the canon, Schayer concludes:

> There is only one answer: evidently they have been transmitted by a tradition old enough and considered to be authoritative by the compilers of the Canon. The last conclusion follows of itself: these texts representing ideas and doctrines contrary to the generally admitted

canonical viewpoint are survivals of older, precanonical Buddhism.[31]

believes that Schayer uncovered evidence of a cult ints that was *precanonical*, a labor that was carried / Constantin Régamey in his summary of Schayer's ,[32] and brought to fruition by Maryla Falk in her ic book, *Nāma-rūpa and Dharma-rūpa*. Ray sum- zes Falk's use of Schayer's methodology as well as :onclusions (with quotations from Falk and page ences to her book):

> This procedure enables her to spell out precanonical conceptions of the cosmos, nirvāṇa, the Buddha, the path, and the saint. According to Falk, in precanonical tradition, there is a threefold division of reality (pp. 115ff.). At the lowest ontic level is the realm of *rūpadhātu* the saṃsāric sphere of name and form (*nāmarūpa*) in which ordinary beings live, die, and are reborn. Above this is the realm of *arūpadhātu*, the sphere of "sheer *nāma*," produced by *samādhi*, an ethereal realm frequented by *yogins* but still not entirely liberated. Finally, at the ultimate ontic level and standing "above" or "outside" of the previous realms, is the realm of nirvāṇa, the "*amṛta* sphere," characterized by *prajñā*. This nirvāṇa is seen as an "abode" or "place" that is gained by the enlightened saint (pp. 111–13). Each of these three orders of reality has a "body" and an "eye" appropriate to it. . . .
>
> The basis of the Buddhist path in precanonical times is the notion that the nirvanic element, as an ontic "essence" or pure consciousness, is immanent within saṃsāra. In this model, then, the three bodies referred to may be understood as concentric realities: the outer, gross *rūpakāya* is stripped away; then the inner, more subtle *nāmakāya* is abandoned leaving finally only the *nirodhakāya* of the liberated saint (pp. 133–34). . . . The saint, then, is the one who has followed this path to its conclusion and has attained liberation, gaining the *nirodhakāya* and its *prajñācakṣus*. . . .
>
> In these precanonical conceptions, the Buddha is understood to have attained a body with two dimensions: an *amṛtakāya* and a *dharmakāya*. The *amṛtakāya* is utterly transcendent, whereas the *dharmakāya* represents the Buddha's presence within saṃsāra and his ongoing salvific activity of compassion (p. 154).

> In the orthodox schools behind the "Hīnayāna" canons, then, the immanentalist doctrine is jettisoned, the *amṛtakāya* is rejected, and the *dharmakāya* is considerably reduced, such that it is "deprived of its transcendent implications and [comes] to be considered as a mere allegorical formulation of the fact that after the Master's final disappearance, the body of the Sayings [*dharmakāya*] was left to guide the later generations of disciples" (p. 167).

Because all of the above notions are consistent with the themes of presence and immanence which Ray has sought to develop throughout his volume, the implications in the work of Schayer and Falk are critical to his case that "the Buddhist cult of saints stands at the center of the earliest knowable Buddhism" (p. 377).

That the tradition of settled monasticism represented perhaps the most conservative orientation possible is evidenced by the zeal of the future Sthaviras in promoting a rigorist *vinaya* expansion to make clearer precisely those issues which formed the subject matter at the Vaiśālī council.[33] Because of its immense importance for the development of Indian Buddhism, and to his major thesis about Indian Buddhist saints, Ray devotes an entire chapter to the process of monasticization, presented in three parts:

1. The first development of monasticism from within the earliest Buddhist community of itinerant renunciants.
2. The transition in early Mahāyāna from a largely forest tradition to that of (conventional) monastic Mahāyāna.
3. A reaction of non-Mahāyānist and proto-Mahāyānist forest traditions to the process of monasticization.

While Ray ponders whether what he calls "town-and-village renunciation" was part of original Buddhism, or developed only after the death of Śākyamuni, he is convinced that town-and-village renunciation (and *not* forest renunciation) provided the major impetus for the settled monastic tradition, and he states this position clearly:

Stanislaw Schayer, "Pre-canonical Buddhism," *Arrhiv Orien-* (and *not Acta Orientalia*, as Ray indicates) 7 (1935): 124. Constantin Régamey, "Le problème du bouddhisme prim- t les derniers travaux de Stanislaw Schayer," *Rocznik Ori- listyczny* 21 (1957): 37–58.

[33] Sholars now readily accept the suggestion that the initial Buddhist schism resulted not from disciplinarity laxity on the part of the future Mahāsāṃghikas, or from the five theses of Mahādeva, but from an attempt to enlarge the scope of the Vinaya on the part of the future Sthaviras. See for example, Janice Nattier and Charles Prebish, "Mahāsāṃghika Origins: The Beginnings of Buddhist Sectarianism," *History of Religions* 16 (February, 1977): 237–72; and Lance Cousins, "The Five Points and the Origins of the Buddhist Schools," in *The Buddhist Forum*, ed. Tadeusz Skorupski (New Delhi: Heritage Publishers, 1992), 2:27–60.

> The way of the forest renunciant has always been regarded in Buddhism as extremely arduous, and with good reason. Only a relatively few are able to make its commitments and sacrifices, to accept its material privation, and to endure its insecure, uncomfortable, and demanding way of life. The classical Buddhist monastic system in effect provided a far less forbidding, much more accessible mode of Buddhist renunciant life, one that encouraged a great many more people to renounce the world than would have been possible under the more arduous and restrictive ideal. (p. 398)

In other words, the monastery provided a safe and reasonable middle ground between the ideal forest renunciant lifestyle postulated by Ray and the larger religious world of India, and it is in this context that the two primary concerns of the settled monastic tradition emerged: concern for behavioral purity and the preservation and study of texts. And each of these points mirrors orthodox Brahmanical society. That behavioral and ritual purity is a central theme for the Brahmanical tradition has been widely acknowledged;[34] further, Buddhist observance of the rules of *prātimokṣa* not only emulates this purity, but provides the double benefit of verifying the purity of the practitioner in the eyes of those both within and outside the saṃgha. Equally, the role of sacred text (and the concomitant commentarial literature) in Brahmanical tradition cannot be overstated, a theme utilized by Frauwallner in his suggestion that early Buddhist text lineages were borrowed from and intended to provide a spiritual authenticity equal to that tradition. To some extent, Frauwallner's propositions have been recently supported by Richard Gombrich.[35] Of course, for Ray it is far more critical to assert that it was the Buddhist forest renunciant who retained "the ancient normative Buddhist forms and continued to affirm their Buddhist identity through the traditional criteria of lifestyle, meditation, and realization" (p. 401). Without minimizing the complexity of this evolutionary pattern, Ray is able to catch the flavor of a gradually developing monastic system that was able to spread Buddha's message as the saṃgha itself spread geographically, cementing its own cohesion in the process, despite compromising a presumably higher ideal maintained in its integrity by the forest renunciant.

In documenting Mahāyāna's progression from a predominantly forest tradition to a settled monastic convention, Ray returns to the texts most supportive of such a view: the *Ugraparipṛcchā Sūtra*, *Ratnaguṇasaṃcayagāthā*, *Rāṣṭrapālaparipṛcchā Sūtra*, and *Saṃdhinirmocana Sūtra*. To this, he adds Hajime Nakamura's contention,[36] valid for a southeast Indian development at least, that a lack of archaeological evidence would be likely from a non-institutionalized tradition . . . precisely what the remains of Buddhist sites like Nāgārjunikoṇḍa reveal. Moreover, he again reminds his readers of Hirakawa's arguments that suggest the development of Mahāyāna from a nonmonastic context. This is important not only because it suggests the pertinence of Ray's claim that Mahāyāna had a forest renunciant origin,[37] but also because it links the forest renunciant bodhisattva with the stūpa worship that became important in later Mahāyāna.

Despite this, it is also possible to postulate a northwestern origin for Mahāyāna, supported by evidence such as that of Tāranātha, who suggests that 500 bodhisattvas attended Kaniṣka's famous council, or of the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa*, which alludes to Kaniṣka's presiding over the establishment of the Prajñāpāramitā. Ray contests this evidence, again citing the lack of archaeological remains, but also on the basis of such texts as the *Vibhāṣā*, which makes no mention of Mahāyāna. However, on the basis of the (earlier cited) research of Lamotte, Hirakawa, Schopen, Nakamura, and on the basis of the records of the travels of the Chinese pilgrims Hsüan-tsang and I-ching, he concludes that after the fourth century, there is a noticeable shift in the evidence, indicating a strong monastic Mahāyāna in the northwest. The technical terms *śākyabhikṣu* and *śākyabhikṣuṇī*, used with particular reference to Mahāyānists, coupled with the terms *vihārasvāmin* and *vihārasvāminī* found in Mahāyāna inscriptions, lends added weight to this claim.

[34] See, for example, Romila Thapar, "Ethics, Religion, and Social Protest in the First Millennium B.C. in Northern India," *Daedalus* (Spring, 1975): 123.

[35] Refer to two articles by Richard Gombrich, "Recovering Buddha's Message," pp. 5–20, and "How the Mahāyāna Began," pp. 21–30, in *The Buddhist Forum*, I: *Seminar Papers 1987–88* (New Delhi: Heritage Publishers, 1990).

[36] See Hajime Nakamura, *Indian Buddhism: A Survey With Bibliographical Notes* (Hirakata City, Osaka: Kansai University Foreign Studies Publication, 1980), 146.

[37] This argument is reinforced by recognizing that one of the most frequent locales for preaching in the Mahāyāna sutras is Vulture Peak Mountain (Gṛdhrakūṭaparvata) near Rājagṛha, an especially desolate site, which Edward Conze notes was overlooked in considering the geographic beginnings of Mahāyāna (see: Edward Conze, tr., *The Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines and Its Verse Summary* [Bolinas, California: Four Seasons Foundation, 1973], xiv–xv).

From the above, Ray is able to piece together both the historical evolution of Mahāyāna monasticism and the process by which it developed:

> The preceding evidence suggests a two-stage development in the evolution of Indian Mahāyāna Buddhism. In the first stage, the Mahāyāna arose as a forest movement. This early Mahāyāna cannot be dated with any precision, although Conze's date of the second or first century B.C.E. seems not unreasonable. In the second stage, which occurred some centuries later, perhaps in the late third and fourth centuries, we find the Mahāyāna developing a monastic side, which is reflected in the evidence from the northwest. By the seventh century, Mahāyāna monasticism is well established, particularly in the northwest.
>
> The preceding evidence also enables us to hypothesize some of the processes by which the Mahāyāna became monasticized. At first, perhaps there were monks living in Nikāya monasteries and following their *vinayas* who began to take an interest in the Mahāyāna. It may also be that some forest renunciants, who belonged to what became the Mahāyāna, desired to live the less arduous renunciant life of the monastery. Sickness, old age, or simply the desire for a more secure and comfortable life could have been motivating factors. Because at first there were no Mahāyānist monasteries, becoming monks for these people would have required undergoing Nikāya ordination and living by Nikāya *prātimokṣas*. Thus, they would have brought their Mahāyāna orientation and affiliation with them into the originally non-Mahāyāna monastic system. That Nikāya monasticism provides the point of origin for Mahāyāna monasticism is demonstrated, of course, in the fact that the Indian Mahāyāna did not initially develop its own *vinaya* but adopted the *vinaya* of Nikāya Buddhism and used that in subsequent history. . . .
>
> A more advanced stage in the monasticization of Mahāyāna would have occurred when the movement had become sufficiently public and popular that the majority of monks in a given monastery identified themselves as Mahāyānists. This is the stage perhaps reflected in the mention of *śākyabhikṣus* and *śākyabhikṣuṇīs* in Buddhist epigraphy. In a somewhat later stage, the emerging Mahāyāna movement would have begun to see itself as possessing a separate and specific identity; in inscriptions dating from the sixth century, the term *Mahāyāna* begins to be used for the first time in relation to such *bhikṣus* and *upāsakas*. At a later stage still, as in the case of I-ching in the seventh century, the Mahāyāna would have come to be understood as a major monastic tradition in India alongside Nikāya Buddhism.
>
> In general, the process of Mahāyāna monasticization shows the flexibility of the early forest Mahāyāna and, in particular, its adaptability not only to lay contexts (in the admission of lay bodhisattvas) but also to those of conventional Nikāya monasticism. But no less, it also reveals the flexibility of settled monasticism in its willingness to engage in potentially creative appropriation of a non-Nikāya forest tradition. Buddhist monastic institutions and Buddhist monks, as representing the Buddhist establishment, always need to avoid rigidity and stultifying conservatism and to remain relevant and religiously attractive. (pp. 412–13)

The response of the forest traditions to the monasticization process is certainly not unexpected, irrespective of whether the referent texts are those of Nikāya Buddhism or Mahāyāna. Consequently, *both* the *Theragāthā* and the *Rāṣṭrapālaparipṛcchā Sūtra* interpret the decay of the *dharma* as coincident with the development of settled monastic life and the gradual disappearance of the forest renunciant ideal. To be sure, they differ on the specifics of the process. Nevertheless, the threefold process is clear. First there is a pure form of *dharma* practiced by forest renunciants, of which Buddha himself presents the archetypal model. Second, as the forest lifestyle and its emphasis on meditation and realization is gradually replaced by settled monastic vocations emphasizing immaculate behavior and textual study, the *dharma* enters a period of decline. Third, the decline culminates in the total erosion and destruction of the *dharma*.

Predicated on the failure of the two-tiered model as an adequate and objective archetype for Indian Buddhism, along with his concomitant argument in support of the inherent value of the forest renunciant lifestyle, the author's final task involves the presentation of a new paradigm for Buddhism, based on his exhaustive study of the pertinent materials. This is accomplished in the "Conclusion: Toward a Threefold Model of Buddhism."

Throughout the volume, Ray has amply demonstrated that there are three distinct types of actors in Indian Buddhist history: settled monastic renunciants, members of the laity, and forest renunciants. In finding an adequate accommodation for the third type of Buddhist practitioner, the author moves away from reliance on what he calls the "conservative monastic evidence" utilized by the proponents of the two-tiered model in favor of a more comprehensive and descriptive employment of the whole of Buddhist literary and historical materials. Thus, while acknowledging the importance of the *prātimokṣa* for maintaining the disciplinary purity requisite for personal and communal acceptance in the large religious context, and understanding the role of textual scholarship for the maintenance of doctrinal integrity, Ray recognizes that the settled monastic lifestyle often compromises the occasion for intensive meditation—that religious exercise requisite for achieving the goal of all Buddhist practice: realization and enlightenment. Precisely because the forest renunciant is free of conventional monastic obligations, he is free to pursue the rigorous path to its final culmination. The resultant attainment on the part of the forest renunciant saints creates a very important kind of benefit for the lay Buddhist community, radically different in nature from the traditional benefits of merit and teaching acquired from the settled monastic community, as Ray notes:

> Not fully separable from these benefits, the laity gain something else: in the forest saint, they may hope to meet an enlightened one face to face and to participate in the intensity of his or her enlightened charisma. As noted, gains won may include a glimpse of liberation or even, for the fortunate, some stage of liberation itself, as was true for early disciples who met the Buddha and heard but a few words from his mouth. (pp. 436–37)

While the interaction between settled monastic renunciants and the lay community is clear enough, as is the relationship between the forest renunciants and that same lay community, Ray also points out an important connection between the followers of the settled monastic lifestyle and the forest renunciants:

> The forest renunciants are also dependent upon the monastics in some interesting ways. For example, in the "forest" chapter of the *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, it is remarked that the bodhisattva of the forest may come to the town or village in order to listen to the recitation of texts and their exposition. This implies that forest renunciant traditions could view the textual preoccupations of town-and-village monastics not only as legitimately Buddhist from the monastic viewpoint, but also as contributing in a positive way to their own spiritual path. (p. 437)

Thus, an interpenetrating symbiosis including all three lifestyles is supposed by Ray, and termed a *threefold* rather than *three-tiered* model, in order to discourage hierarchial suppositions. Regarding his new paradigm, Ray concludes:

> The threefold model of Buddhism suggested here, with its strengths and limitations as an explanatory device, represents a distinct improvement over the two-tiered model in helping us to understand not only forest renunciation and forest saints in India but Indian Buddhism itself . . . In fact, as we have seen, the very evidence that is adduced as incriminating by the proponents of the two-tiered model of Buddhism may, when seen from a different angle, equally—perhaps even more forcefully and convincingly—make a case for just the opposite conclusion: that the forest saints embody the highest ideals of Indian Buddhism and represent a unique kind of Buddhist creativity, without an appreciation of which the origin and much of the dynamics of Buddhism in India cannot be adequately understood. (pp. 446–47)

That our knowledge of Indian Buddhist history has benefited in the last half-century from the studies of Étienne Lamotte, Akira Hirakawa, Hajime Nakamura, A. K. Warder, and others is uncontestable. In addition, the field has benefited from careful investigations of topics that are specific to one aspect or another of the development of Indian Buddhism. Included here must be works on the early councils and sectarian tradition by Bareau, Nattier and Prebish, and Cousins; studies of the early Vinaya and monastic tradition by Frauwallner, Dutt, Holt, and Prebish, and of the stūpa cult by Bareau, Schopen, Hirakawa, and Lamotte; investigations of precanonical Buddhism by Schayer, Régamey, and Falk; work on ideal types by Dayal, Horner, Kloppenborg, and Wiltshire. It might be possible to continue citing topics and researchers indefinitely. On the other hand, the number of these publications that are genuinely synthetic, that conclusively resolve puzzling issues in the development of Indian Buddhism is quite small indeed.

Any volume that boldly suggests from the outset the necessity for a reconceptualization of Indian Buddhist history is likely to evoke a strong response, and when it grounds its reconceptualization primarily on a consideration of Indian Buddhist hagiography, its reader will certainly begin navigating its argument with suspicion aroused. No doubt, the book will certainly have its share of detractors, some of whom will passionately disagree both with Ray's thesis and his methodology. In so doing, they will seriously undervalue one of the most exhaustive and meticulous contributions to Buddhology of the past quarter-century. The organizational design of the volume is clear and concise in all respects. The author provides a careful statement of the currently prevailing Buddhological standpoint on the topic (referred to as the "two-tiered model" of Buddhism), presents a wealth of information on each of the traditional types of Indian Buddhist saint, devotes several chapters to describing the cult and ritual life that grew up around the worship of those saints, and describes the development of the

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settled monastic lifestyle and the vast differences that emerged between that settled tradition (supported by the two-tiered model that came to be normative in Indian Buddhist history) and the life of the forest saint. He then offers a new threefold model, establishing a symbiotic relationship between the three types of practitioners in Indian Buddhism.

The above is no easy task for it demands not only the methodological acumen to synthesize an intimidating amount of data from subject domains sometimes related more by geographical location than anything else, but also the insight to understand the importance of disparity in Indian Buddhist history, to learn from incongruity as well as congruity. Moreover, to find the most logical means of assembly and application for the contradictory materials uncovered, and to weave them correctly into the fabric of that which is known with relative certainty, requires a talent only infrequently possessed. As if that was not enough, the reader is witness to a highly unusual episode of profound scholarly venture, a remarkable, creative exercise in generating innovative, new knowledge, precisely the kind of erudition essential and requisite if we are ever to understand Indian Buddhism properly.

GLASSNER'S MESOPOTAMIAN CHRONICLES*

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A review of J.-J. Glassner's recent French translations.

This volume, appearing in a semi-popular series of French translations of texts ranging in time from the ancient Near East to the Renaissance, presents fifty-two Mesopotamian documents with an extensive general introduction discussing Mesopotamian historiography and the place of chronicles within that tradition. The selection of texts, broader than that contained in A. K. Grayson's definitive *Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles*,[1] includes thirty-seven traditional chronicles,[2] five kinglists,[3] and other miscellaneous documents not usually identified with the chronicle genre, even though in some cases the word "chronicle" may appear in their popular title (e.g., the Tummal "chronicle," the Lagash ensi-list, the Mari and Neo-Assyrian eponym "chronicles," the Nabonidus "chronicle," and the Nabu-shum-ishkun verse account published by von Weiher[4]). Glassner thus makes available a wide variety of texts for the interested reader.

Glassner's essay on historiography ("L'Avenir du passé," pp. 19–47) deserves a wider audience than it is likely to reach through this volume. Making inferences from the spotty and equivocal evidence typical for Mesopotamia, he creatively reconstructs the use of the past by the ancient historiographer. While not all his views may win acceptance, the overall statement could form a useful starting point for broader discussions of the subject, which have tended to bog down in recent years either in minutiae or in facile over-generalization. Glassner's attempt (p. 52) to define the essential characteristics of chronicles (namely prose texts, written in the third person, which note selected events briefly and by date)[5] is less satisfactory. Succinct prose descriptions of chronologically arranged events can also be found in Assyrian royal annals;[6] and there are significant sections

* This is a review article of: *Chroniques mésopotamiennes*. By Jean-Jacques Glassner. La Roue à Livres, 19. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1993. Pp. 305. FF 165 (paper).

[1] Texts from Cuneiform Sources, 5 (Locust Valley, N.Y.: J. J. Augustin, 1975).

[2] Including two that have appeared since Grayson's edition (nos. 45 and 47) and a tiny Babylonian fragment not edited by Grayson (no. 27). The genre of the fragmentary no. 48, as noted by Glassner (p. 231), cannot be ascertained with reasonable assurance. The very small scraps, nos. 42–43, though accepted as chronicles by Glassner, could as well be literary fragments; both of these are from the Kuyunjik collection and include direct address (in the second person masculine singular), which is relatively uncommon in chronicles. No. 31, another tiny fragment published by A. Sachs in "Achaemenid Royal Names in Babylonian Astronomical Texts," *American Journal of Ancient History* 2 (1977): 144–47, is also difficult to classify.

[3] A selection of those written in formal prose (but not the simple kinglists consisting of names alone or of names and regnal lengths), including the Sumerian Kinglist, the Assyrian Kinglist, a Hellenistic kinglist beginning with Alexander the Great, and one of Grayson's chronicles (no. 18) which has since been categorized as a kinglist (=Glassner, no. 3).

[4] E. von Weiher, *Spätbabylonische Texte aus Uruk*, vol. 3, Ausgrabungen der Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft, 12 (Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag, 1988), no. 58.

[5] Because of his inclusion of kinglists as a subspecies of "chronicle," Glassner's definition differs from that of J. Van Seters: "a narration of political or religious events in chronological order and [. . .] closely dated to the years of a king's reign" (*In Search of History* [New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1983], 80). Van Seters had recognized the close affinity between kinglists and chronicles but did not wish to combine the traditional categories. Glassner makes a qualified joining of the categories but includes only kinglists written in sentence form (thereby excluding those texts which consist principally of royal names and regnal lengths); his new division of the kinglist genre, while perhaps convenient for a translation series aimed at a wider audience, offers few advantages for scholars.

[6] E.g., major sections of the Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III, though most of these are written in the first person.

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Guy Claxton

Whodunnit?

Unpicking the 'Seems' of Free Will

The cornerstone of the dominant folk theory of free will is the presumption that conscious intentions are, at least sometimes, causally related to subsequent 'voluntary' actions. Like all folk theories that have become 'second nature', this model skews perception and cognition to highlight phenomena and interpretations that are consistent with itself, and pathologize or render invisible those that are not. A variety of experimental, neurological and everyday phenomena are reviewed that cumulatively cast doubt on this comforting folk model. An alternative view, more consistent with the evidence, sees intentions and actions as co-arising in complex neural systems that are capable of (fallibly) anticipating the outcomes of their own ongoing processing. Such tentative predictions, when they become conscious, are appropriated by a 'self system' that believes itself to be instigatory, and reframed as 'commands'. This confusion between prediction and control is hypothesized to arise particularly in selves that are identified in terms of a complex proliferation of partially conflicting goal-states. Such a system routinely needs to carry out detailed and time-consuming analyses of the motivational character of situations, thus creating the conditions in which anticipatory neural states surface into consciousness. The experience of 'self control' occurs when the system successfully predicts the dominance of a 'higher', more long-term or a priori less likely goal state, over another that is seen as 'lower', short-term or more likely.

The Untrustworthiness of 'Seems'

When asked why people believed for so long that the sun went round the earth, Wittgenstein is reputed to have replied: 'How would it have looked, if it had looked as if the earth went round the sun?' The answer, of course, is: pretty much the same. Likewise, from most vantage points, and for many purposes, it certainly seems as if the earth is flat. Without the aid of a telescope, or the ability to take simultaneous observations from the tops and bottoms of cliffs, the disappearance of ships as they sail away can be as easily attributed to the limits of visual acuity as they can to their sinking below a hypothetical horizon.

Such 'folk theories' are resistant to being revised, or even questioned, for a number of reasons. First, they do a good job, to a first approximation, of accounting for the data. It is only by paying attention to an accumulation of details that are apparently trivial, hard to spot, or even invisible without the aid of specialized equipment or procedures, that their flaws become apparent, and the possibility, let alone the necessity,

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of an alternative 'theory' can be entertained. Second, they account for the most obvious phenomena in a way that accords with 'common sense' — the existing collateral body of folk theory. In particular, they are congenial: they offer a comforting model of individuals, their tribes and species, and their place in the great scheme of things. The idea that the sun goes round the earth places us at the centre of creation. It is nicer to see humankind as the pinnacle of evolution, or 'God's chosen', than as the provisional outcome of a vast concatenation of historical accidents. Third, the contrary evidence to the consensual view may be not only intrinsically slight; it may become virtually hidden. Once such a view has been culturally adopted and become 'second nature', then perception itself becomes skewed and selective, so that inconsistent trifles become invisible, and persistent interpretations self-reinforcing.

The self-perpetuating nature of belief systems is blindingly obvious, except when one happens to be inside them (Stolzenberg,1984). To a culture that is inside one belief system, it is simply a fact that the crops failed because the gods were displeased, and there will be plenty of 'evidence' that makes this 'fact' self-evident. To a different culture, the gales and floods that ruined the corn are the effects of entomic activity in remote corners of the planet: those pesky butterflies recklessly flapping their chaotic wings. In one dominant worldview, it is obvious that hunger and malnutrition in Africa and Asia are caused by a shortage of food. It takes the meticulous research of an economics Nobel laureate, Amartya Sen, to show that this obviousness is in fact ill-founded. How things *seem* is, as we well know, an unreliable indicator of their actual provenance, especially when the phenomena in question are connected to what Tart (1980) calls a 'consensual trance', and when the dominant interpretation seems to offer its interpreters comfort or privilege. It takes sharp, disinterested observation to force a reluctant acknowledgement that the way things seem is not the way they are.

The Invisible Unconscious and the 'Seems' of Folk Psychology

The disparity between 'seems' and 'is' reveals itself in the way people construe their own experience — their 'folk psychology' — as well as in their 'folk cosmology'. Demonstrations abound. To a well-meaning informant in an innocent-looking consumer survey, it genuinely seems as if the rightmost pair of pantyhose in the shopping-mall display is finer or more elegant than the rest — though they are in fact all identical, and we can show that it is their position, and not their composition, that most strongly determines the choice (Nisbett and Wilson, 1977). To an observer of two hamsters in an Ames-room cage, it genuinely seems as if they are changing size as they run along the back wall, though, from the outside, we can clearly see how the geometrical illusion is created. To the average gambler, it seems unquestionable that the coin that has come up heads ten times in a row has got to be more likely to be tails next time, even though they may themselves have had the probability arguments explained to them umpteen times. Collections such as Nisbett and Ross's *Human Inference* (1980), Gilovich's aptly-titled *How We Know What Isn't So* (1991), or Blakeslee's more popular *Beyond the Mind* (1996) make unanswerable cases for the suspect status of a rich variety of psychological 'seems'.

One common cause of the disparities between folk psychology and cognitive reality is the general neglect, in the former, of the role played by unconscious mental

processes in normal mental activity. Folk psychology admits odd cases in which 'the unconscious' seems to be at work, most obviously in psychopathology and hypnosis, and in such curiosities as sleep learning and subliminal advertising. But, in vernacular accounts of mundane cognition, the 'intelligent unconscious' is conspicuous by its absence. Yet we now know a great deal about the ubiquitous influence of subliminal stimulation and non-conscious mental processes on awareness and action: the conscious 'seems' (e.g. Marcel, 1983; Velmans, 1991). We are not privy to all the data. Phenomena such as memory, creativity and decision-making reflect such unconscious phenomena (Claxton, 1999). People who tend to 'comfort eat' can be induced to do so by the presentation of a threatening subliminal message, but not by the same message presented consciously (Patton, 1992). Split-brain patients can be encouraged to act in curious ways, for which they then give explanations that are convincingly confabulated but demonstrably false. More informally, a visual image, a snatch of a long-forgotten tune, a desire for a childhood food can emerge into consciousness without any apparent precursor, yet sometimes can be traced back to a thought or an event not, at the time, consciously registered. Here again, things are not always as they seem.

The 'Seems' of Free Will

The way people think about their 'will' — the folk model of the relationship between what we think or intend and what we actually do — is perhaps the area of human psychology where all the considerations illustrated in this preamble loom the largest and weigh most heavily. *A fortiori*, we have to approach the phenomena of 'free will' distrustful of observations that seem immediate and unequivocal, and construals that appear self-evident. It certainly *seems* as if each of us is a centre of volition, and that conscious deliberation plays a causal role in determining our plans and actions — albeit an intermittent one. And sophisticated theoretical superstructures can be built which seem to buttress, but which actually presuppose, this 'common sense' (e.g. Baars, 1997; Sperry, 1985). Even — perhaps especially — when in academic mode, we have to try to see where unexamined belief or self-interest might lead to a preference for one view over another, and how this might in turn result in an unconscious epistemological squint or a tendency to load the observational dice. What phenomena, within the consensual view, seem to be trivial or even invisible, or are explained away as insignificant aberrations — uninteresting 'noise' that adds up to nothing? What alternative positions — 'epiphenomenalism'?, 'mysticism'? — tend to be dismissed out of hand as transparently nonsensical or potentially dangerous? ('If we didn't have free will and self-control, we'd all run amok' and suchlike, presented as knockdown arguments). It is only with a stance that is as radically sceptical as we can make it that we can hope to pursue a disinterested inquiry into the phenomenology of free will.

The consensual view of free will presupposes a view of the human psyche in which there are self-evident distinctions between 'self' and 'other', and 'body' and 'mind', which naturally lead to questions about who or what is in charge. What is the source of action, and what is the functional relationship between conscious mental events on the one hand, and physical and physiological events on the other? In folk psychology, once these dualisms have been accepted, the instigator of action has to be either 'me' — identified as a centre of conscious intelligence — or something else, identified as

'not me'. If it is 'me', I possess, and exercise, free will. If it is 'not me', then — given the general neglect of unconscious influences — my actions are the effects of external causes and I am 'determined'. And if this latter option is construed, within that folk model, as aversive, then the idea that conscious intention is the source of 'voluntary' action has to be vigorously promoted. The existence of a tight, causal relationship between intention and intelligent action becomes a lynch-pin of the passionately espoused model of conscious-self-as-instigator. As Dennett says in *Elbow Room: The Varieties of Free Will Worth Wanting*:

> If having free will matters, it must be because not having free will would be awful, and there must be some grounds for doubting that we have it. . . . But what exactly are we afraid of?. . . Not having free will would be somewhat like being in prison, or being hypnotized, or being paralysed, or being a puppet . . . (1984, p. 5).

If the unconscious is admitted, it is only in terms of vague but powerful images — psychological equivalents of mad Mrs Rochester in her unacknowledged attic — that motivate us to protect and prove our imperilled sense of volition: zombies, aliens, Machiavellian manipulators, a sinister 'brains' behind the delicate operation that we take ourselves to be.

The Nature of Intention

One of the most compelling sources of apparent evidence for the folk model of the instigatory self is the apparent coincidence of deliberation, intention and action. I considered; I decided; I intended; and I did. When these events occur across a plausible time scale, and where their contents match, there seem to be good grounds for inferring the identity, and the efficacy, of the 'I' that is the (supposedly) repeated subject of these successive predicates. From the correlation and the sequence we infer the causality, in rather the same way that the possession of supernatural powers is deduced from experiences in which a dream or a premonition is actually followed by the predicted event. 'I was thinking evil thoughts about miserable old Auntie Joan, and sure enough, ten minutes later, Mother rang to say she had been taken into hospital.' 'I had the thought that it was time for me to get up, and, sure enough, seconds later I am struggling into my dressing gown and heading for the bathroom.' The accurate anticipation is taken as *prima facie* evidence of the power of thought to control or influence physical events.

Even if such correlations were frequent and reliable, there would remain the familiar methodological problems about inferring a causality from a correlation. But are they as robust as we think? Beliefs in the paranormal are famously fuelled by amnesia for all the times when a fleeting thought or fantasy was *not* followed by a corresponding reality; and by people's ability to massage their own memories and interpretations (as they do with horoscopes) to enhance the apparent fit. Do we do something similar with the evidence for our own volition? Are intention and intelligent action as tightly coupled as our folk theory of self requires them to be?

It is hardly front-page news that intentions are neither necessary nor sufficient for intelligent actions to occur. What about all the occasions on which such actions occur without any preceding intention: the times I wander round the supermarket absent-mindedly filling my trolley with the produce I want, while totally preoccupied with the presentation I have to make at work on Monday; drive adroitly for miles without

even being aware of the traffic; cook whilst chatting; adjust the pace and direction of a seminar discussion without any conscious deliberation, or even without being able, retrospectively, to say what I did or why? The vast majority of my sophisticated volitional virtuosity, in both mundane and professional spheres, plays itself out in the absence of conscious direction from 'mission control'. When asked subsequently how or why we did as we did, we may sometimes produce a plausible rationale, confidently backdated; but equally often we are at a loss, or happily admit that our reasoning represents a *post hoc* inference rather than a prior intent. 'I'm sorry I was so ratty last night, sweetheart; I must have been tired.'

If I observe it closely, even my getting out of bed does not furnish evidence of volition as robust as I might have hoped: what frequently happens is that I think 'I must get up' or 'I'm going to get up', and then my mind drifts onto other things and I continue lying there. What actually happens, often, is that I am in the middle of a completely unrelated train of thought and suddenly 'come to' to find myself already in the process of getting up. The truth is, when I decide to get up, I frequently don't. When I have stopped thinking about getting up, at some point I do. At the very least I have to conclude that the coupling between intention and action is a rather loose one. Failures of 'will power' are as much the rule as the exception, and there is no shortage of paving slabs for the 'road to hell'. If there turns out to be no subsequent manifestation of a publicly declared intention, no follow-through, we may even try to salvage a sense of self-efficacy by sleight-of-hand, claiming that 'I changed my mind' — though who it was that changed what, exactly, remains entirely opaque. Alternatively, we treat such lapses, if we cannot help noticing them, as if they were rare or sporadic aberrations, each of which can be given an *ad hoc* account, and not as cumulative evidence of the inadequacy of the simple 'free will' story. We accept the popular misreading of 'the exception proves the rule' — as substantiating, rather than testing, it — and do not register the fact that such exceptions are, if we look for them, far from rare.

The fact that the phenomenology of decision-making actually has great holes in it has been widely noted in the philosophical literature. For example:

> Are decisions voluntary? Or are they things that happen to us? From some fleeting vantage points they seem to be the pre-eminently voluntary moves in our lives, the instants at which we exercise our agency to the fullest. But those same decisions can also be seen to be strangely out of our control. We have to wait to see how we are going to decide something, and when we do decide, it bubbles up to consciousness from we know not where. We do not witness it being *made*; we witness its *arrival*. This can then lead to the strange idea that Central Headquarters is not where we, as conscious introspectors, are; it is somewhere deeper within us, and inaccessible to us. E.M. Forster famously asked 'How can I tell what I think until I see what I say?' — the words of an outsider, it seems, waiting for a bulletin from the interior (Dennett, 1984, p. 78).

And again, the experience of being the recipient, rather than the architect, of our decisions, cannot be dismissed as a mere glitch or curio of cognition.

> Once we recognize that our conscious access to our own decisions is problematic, we may go on to note how many of the important turning points in our lives were unaccompanied, so far as retrospective memory of conscious experience goes, by *conscious* decisions. 'I have decided to take the job', one says. And very clearly one takes oneself to be reporting on something one has *done* recently, but reminiscence shows only that yesterday one was undecided, and today one is no longer undecided; at some moment in the interval the decision *must have happened*, without fanfare. Where did it happen? At Central

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> Headquarters, of course. But such a deduction reveals that we are building a psychological theory of 'decision[-making]' by idealizing and extending our actual practice; *by inserting decisions where theory demands them, not where we have any first-hand experience of them.* I must have made a decision, one reasons, since I see that I have definitely 'made up my mind', and hadn't 'made up my mind' yesterday (pp. 80f.; emphases added).

If conscious deliberation and intention are neither necessary nor sufficient for intelligent action, are they at least helpful? Do we do better when we try to think before we act, or think whilst we are acting, than if we do not? Not always, it appears. People who are enjoined to 'think carefully' about important choices (choosing next year's college courses) or aesthetic preferences (an art print to hang at home) are subsequently less happy with their decisions than people who have chosen more 'intuitively' (Wilson and Schooler, 1991). People who are trying to think about their skill whilst they are performing a physical task become clumsy and self-conscious (Masters, 1992), as do beginners trying to speak a foreign language (Krashen, 1987). The appearance of conscious monitoring and intention very often leads to self-consciousness, and a concomitant juddering or even breakdown of performance. Contrariwise, the fluent execution of complex skill under demanding conditions, in the state known as 'flow', is characterized by a complete absence of deliberation, intention or self-consciousness (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990).

As I say, casting philosophical doubt on the naive view of the 'inner person' — sitting in the brightly-lit executive office of consciousness, collecting information, weighing evidence, making decisions and issuing orders — is not new. Gilbert Ryle (1949), for example, asks: 'if voluntary actions are those produced by an agent's 'volitions' [decisions, intentions etc.], are those volitions themselves voluntary? If so, we get an infinite regress; if not, we get voluntary acts as the result of involuntary events'. And the much-maligned B.F. Skinner suggests:

> The function of the inner man is to provide an explanation which will not be explained in turn. Explanation stops with him. He is not [seen as] a mediator between past history and current behaviour; he is a centre from which behaviour emanates. He initiates, originates and creates, and in doing so he remains, as he was for the Greeks, divine. We say that he is autonomous — and as far as a science of behaviour is concerned, that means miraculous (1972, p. 19).

Neuro- and cognitive scientists from Donald Hebb (1949) to Patricia Churchland (1986) have, like Skinner, been at pains to do away with the homunculus which is so often concealed within the folk theory of personhood of which free will is such an integral part. Indeed, one could go on listing sources of evidence, experimental, neurological, philosophical, quotidian and indeed spiritual or transpersonal, that suggest that the folk model of free will is inadequate. However, having adumbrated the problem, it might now be more fruitful to see what an alternative approach to the phenomenology of free will might look like.

The Co-arising of Action and Intention

The fact that conscious intention and voluntary action turn out to be so loosely coupled is a problem for any folk model of free will which posits that the former is the predominant causal determinant of the latter. It is much less so if we adopt the

alternative interpretation of a 'correlation': that the statistical co-occurrence (however loose) reflects the operation of underlying processes that are related to both. If A and B covary, and A usually preceded B, that doesn't necessarily mean that A causes B. It could equally be that both A and B are manifestations of a third set of processes, C, the time characteristics of which just happen, every so often, to make A pop up shortly before B. On this picture, the facts that intentions are sometimes followed by the intended action and sometimes not, that voluntary actions sometimes occur without concomitant intentions, and that intentions sometimes impede the execution of actions, invite speculation about the relationship between and nature of A, B and C. If we admit that 'C', whatever it is, comprises preconscious processes, then the loose-coupling of A and B no longer has to be construed as aberrant or anathema. Revising the sense of self to include such pre- or unconscious processes would then render the perceptual squint unnecessary.

The idea that conscious intentions and voluntary actions co-arise is substantiated by various neurological findings. Well known are Libet's (1985) data showing that cortical precursors of voluntary movements can be detected about a third of a second before the emergence of the conscious intention to move. More striking still are Grey Walter's (1963) demonstrations that such brain activation can be used to pre-empt people's own conscious decisions. Patients with electrodes implanted in the motor cortex were invited to look at a sequence of slides, advancing from one to the next, at their own speed, by pushing a button. Unbeknownst to them, however, the button was a dummy. What actually advanced the slides was a burst of activity in the motor cortex, transmitted directly to the projector via the implanted electrodes. The patients reported the curious feeling that the projector was anticipating their decision, initiating a slide change just as they were 'about to' move on, but before they had 'decided' to press the button. In other studies, Grey Walter found that EEG readiness potentials taken from RAF bombardiers, as they were lining up to drop a simulated bomb, preceded the conscious decision to press the bomb release button. (I regret that I have no reference for this finding, which I vividly remember being illustrated on a rather scratchy film when I was at school.) In cases such as these, physiological measures enable us to infer that 'C', the genuinely causal precursor of both voluntary action and conscious intention, is probably, to put it crudely, the brain.

But we do not need to rely on such indirect inferences. There are occasions when this loosely coupled co-arising of intention and action can be experienced directly — that is, unmediated by the habitual interpretative framework of the conventional self system. Oliver Sacks reports such an experience in his autobiographical book *A Leg to Stand On* (1984, pp. 129–33). Having broken his left leg badly in a fall on a Norwegian mountain, Sacks found himself, some weeks later, sharing a hospital bed with an apparently healed leg that felt as if it didn't 'belong' to the rest of his body, and stubbornly refused to obey orders. 'I gazed at it and felt I don't know you, you're not part of me . . . I was now an amputee. And yet not an ordinary amputee. For the leg, objectively, externally, was still there; [but] it had disappeared subjectively, internally.' For three weeks Sacks lay shackled to a lifeless, alien appendage that stubbornly resisted all his most intense efforts to get it to move. And then, one day, when he was *not* trying to move it, the leg suddenly came back, and in a rather unsettling fashion. The feeling of a conscious 'intention' to move returned at the same time as the movement, but it did not seem to be the cause of the movement, or in control; rather it was

an accompaniment of the movement, one aspect of a whole action that happened 'by itself'. Here is how Sacks describes it.

> When I awoke I had an odd impulse to flex my left leg, and in that self-same moment immediately did so! Here was a movement previously impossible.... And yet, in a trice, I had thought it and done it. There was no cogitation, no preparation, no deliberation, whatever; there was no 'trying'; I had the impulse, flash-like — and flash-like I acted. The idea, the impulse, the action, were all one — I could not say which came first, they all came together. I suddenly 'recollected' how to move the leg, and in the instant of recollection I actually did it. The knowing-what-to-do had no theoretical quality whatever — it was entirely practical, immediate — and compelling. It came to me suddenly and spontaneously — out of the blue.

Gradually these involuntary psychosomatic bundles of impulse-plus-action started to come more frequently, and to involve a re-assertion of ownership: a growing re-incorporation of the errant leg back into Sacks' overall sense of bodily identity.

> The power of moving, the idea of moving, the impulse to move, would suddenly come to me — and as suddenly go. [Yet] these flashes... involuntary, spontaneous, unbidden, as they were, did most certainly, and essentially, and fundamentally, involve *me*: they weren't just 'a muscle jumping' but '*me* remembering', and they involved me, my mind, no less than my body.

Sacks describes this curious phase as the returning of his 'will'.

> Yet there was an extreme limitation, a peculiarity, to this will.... It was always accompanied by an 'impulse' or 'impulsion' — of an oddly intrusive and irrelevant sort.... I welcomed it, enjoyed it, played with it — and finally mastered it. But it was will and action of a most peculiar sort, the resultant being a strange hybrid — half jerk, half act.... I found this experience amusing, fascinating — and somewhat shocking; for it showed very clearly that *one could have a sense or an illusion of free-will, even when the impulse was primarily physiological in nature.*
>
> [First], it seemed to me, I willed — and nothing happened: so that I was forced into a singular doubt, and kept asking myself 'Did I have a will? Have I a will? What has happened to my will?' Now, suddenly, unbidden, out of the blue, I had sudden compulsions, or convulsions, of will.... First I was will-less, unable to command; then I was willed, or commanded, like a puppet; and now, finally, I could take over the reins of command and say 'I will' (or 'I won't') with full truth and conviction [emphasis added].

Sacks' account suggests that the experience of intention as the antecedent cause of action is closely linked to a particular sense of self as owner and instigator. The trauma that led to a disidentification with the shattered limb had two effects: a loss of belonging and a loss of control. And as the leg began spontaneously to move, so the subliminal internal signals that heralded each movement had to be relearned, and as they were, so re-emerged first the ability to predict a movement; then a feeling of control; and finally a rehabilitated sense of ownership.

It does not take a traumatic experience on a Scandinavian mountainside, however, to produce an experiential reappraisal of 'intention'. It happens routinely in certain kinds of meditation. Especially in the *vipassana* traditions of Thai and Burmese Buddhism, meditators are taught to focus their attention on current thoughts, sensations and movements are they come and go. To aid the development of this meticulous awareness, the practitioner is instructed to make a 'mental note' of different kinds of experiences as they arise, change and fade away. For example Mahasi Sayadaw, one of the foremost of contemporary Burmese *vipassana* teachers, advises:

> Should an itching sensation be felt in any part of the body, keep the mind on that part and make a mental note *itching*.... Should the itching continue and become too strong and you intend to rub the itching part, be sure to make a mental note *intending*. Slowly lift the hand, simultaneously noting the action of *lifting*, and *touching* when the hand touched the part that itches. Rub slowly in complete awareness of *rubbing*. When the itching sensation has disappeared and you intend to discontinue the rubbing, be mindful of making the usual mental note of *intending*. Slowly withdraw the hand, concurrently making a mental note of the action, *withdrawing*. When the hand rests in its usual place touching the leg, *touching* (1971, pp. 5–6).

As practice develops, so the awareness of a rising 'intention' is itself experienced impersonally, as having the same status as an itch or the sound of a cricket. Intentions bubble up into conscious awareness, just as other thoughts and sensations do: they are no longer experienced as having any causal status. 'When an intention and an action match — very good. When they do not match — equally good'. As a result of neurological damage, or of a heightening of attentional acuity, the phenomenology of intention undergoes a radical shift.

The Brains Behind the Operation

As I said in the Introduction, the idea of unconscious intelligence is much more widely accepted within contemporary cognitive science than it is in folk psychology. Evidence comes from a variety of sources, in addition to those, such as the semantic priming and masking studies of Marcel (1983), I alluded to earlier. They include 'hidden observer' effects (Bornstein and Pittman,1992), implicit learning and memory (Berry, 1997; Lewicki *et al.*, 1997), incubation and intuition in decision-making (Schooler *et al.*, 1993), and neurological disorders such as blindsight and neglect (Weiskrantz, 1986). However, these demonstrations have sometimes been construed as a collection of specific curiosities of the mind, rather than, as I have suggested, a cumulative demonstration of both the power and the ubiquity of tacit cognition (Claxton, 1999). In the strongest version of the 'unconscious HQ' model, conscious experiences, even those that seem to show the mind at its most rational, articulate or deliberate, are represented as corollaries of embodied activation states that are themselves neither conscious nor open to direct introspection — ever.

There are any number of ways of modelling the workings of what Dennett referred to as 'central headquarters'. For the present argument, it does not matter whether we use the language of information processing or of 'conceptual nervous systems' (Hebb, 1949) and neural networks — though temperamentally I prefer the latter. In these terms we might visualize the 'intelligent unconscious' as an embodied, distributed 'eco-bio-computer': an interconnected set of modular networks, comprising central and autonomic nervous systems, endocrine and immune systems, as well as a shifting environmental resource bank of materials and tools, both physical and socio-cultural, along the lines recently suggested by authors such as Francisco Varela and others in *The Embodied Mind* (1991) and Andy Clark in *Being There* (1997). But, as I say, all that really is at stake here in the fact that consciousness is not privy to most of the workings of this model.

In any such model, all the operations of perception, anticipation, action selection and assembly, and decision-making are subserved by the sequential transformation of activation patterns over recurrent networks of elements whose 'strengths' are subject

to long-term learning and short-term priming effects. 'Consciousness' is associated with or 'produced by' states of the network that possess certain characteristics, and not by those that do not. One of the features that has been most reliably associated with the 'conditions of neuronal adequacy' for consciousness is some kind of reverberation or prolongation of activity (e.g. Libet, 1985). Thus neural transformations that proceed rapidly and smoothly do not produce any corollary states of conscious anticipation. In familiar domains, where intuitive expertise is high, patterns of neural activation quickly segue into each other without relaxing into any intermediate states of resonance, until they eventuate in patterns that innervate smooth or striate muscle. The processing sequence does not achieve, in the interim, the requisite spatiotemporal stability for any anticipatory consciousness to arise, and skilled action is therefore unaccompanied by any sense of intention.

However, when the situational demands are more complex and/or less routine — where the requisite sequence of activation patterns is less clearly prescribed by the connection strengths laid down by previous experience — then the onrush of activation may be slowed or halted from time to time, to allow the evidence to be enriched before action is implemented. As cognition is slowed down, so environmental information arising through the special senses, and information about multiple, perhaps conflicting inner need-states, can be sampled more fully; lateral connotations and associations within the modular networks can be recruited to flesh out the emerging neural 'picture'; and alternative action scenarios can be activated vicariously to check their possible consequences against currently active goal states. To use Greenfield's (1995) metaphor, 'epicentres' of neural activation can be maintained for longer while their associative ripples spread out and mingle, allowing more information to be recruited and more subtle and creative interweavings of activation to be generated. In such cases, the conditions of neuronal adequacy for anticipatory consciousness are more likely to be met, and what will begin to emerge into conscious awareness are states of the biocomputer that represent the 'options' and information sources which it is currently sampling. More specifically, we might reasonably suppose that, of all the current centres of activation, it will be that energetically interconnected subset which corresponds to the momentary 'front-runner', the current best guess about what is likely to happen, which subserves consciousness.

On this picture, 'intentions' appear to be not forms of control, but of internal prediction, and 'free will' is itself reframed as a phenomenon of anticipation rather than of conscious instigation. By drawing on proven (or at least plausible) characteristics of the human biological-ecological system, we are able to provide a psychological model to underpin Ambrose Bierce's prescient definition of 'intention', in his wonderful *Devil's Dictionary* (1958), as: 'the mind's sense of the prevalence of one set of influences over another set: an effect whose cause is the imminence, immediate or remote, of the performance of the act intended by the person incurring the intention'. (Bierce comments on his own definition: 'When figured out and accurately apprehended, this will be found one of the most penetrating and far-reaching definitions in the whole dictionary', and I suspect he is quite right.)

This approach thus generates natural accounts of the facts that (a) conscious intentions are more likely to arise when decisions are complicated and processing is protracted; and (b) they are often wrong. If an intention is really an internal prediction by the biocomputer of its own future state, and if such predictions are based, as they must

be, on past regularities, then in complex situations, any processing that occurs after the prediction has been issued is quite likely to turn up unexpected problems or new considerations. These may cause the activation of additional circuitry, or switch activation patterns into unanticipated channels, and thus render the prediction false (or at least disrupt the temporal relationship between prediction and action which might otherwise have supported the interpretation of the former as an intention).

'Free Won't' and Self Control

A variant of this cautious, 'retarded' cognition, evolutionarily advantageous in situations of uncertainty, would allow the assembly and elaboration of the front-runner response to proceed while the corollary checking and resonating is still going on — but to inhibit actual implementation of the prepared action sequence until (at some strategically determined time- or information-limited moment) the check is determined to have been completed, and the 'green light' for the predicted action can be given (or not). Just as a 'racing start' involves revving the engine at the same time as stamping on the brake, so survival would plausibly be enhanced by getting ready to carry out the action that seems, on the basis of a preliminary analysis of the situation, to be the most advantageous, at the same time as one is carrying out such further checks as time allows. If new information or more subtle sources of threat are uncovered by the check, then the prepared action can be aborted at the last minute. Thus it is that Libet and others have come to associate volition more with the vetoing of action than its instigation: Richard Gregory's 'free won't' rather than 'free will'.

Conscious premonitions are attached precisely to actions that look as if they are going to happen — and then, sometimes, don't. Again, what folk psychology construes as 'will power' — with its notorious 'fallibility' — turns out to be a property not of some imperfect agent but of a design feature of the biocomputer. In the case of apparent self control, an earlier prediction (construed as 'Intention 1') is revised, as a result of further processing, and superseded by a second prediction ('Intention 2') which often matches the ensuing action better than the first. The first prediction — that one is about to reach for the cream cake — is 'resisted' as the checking process uncovers and recruits additional goal states and possible consequences that are sufficient to tip the motivational balance. When (as in this example) Intention 2 is judged to be of greater moral worth (as opposed to being merely 'selfish'), or when it seems to instantiate a more long-term goal or interest, or even if it appears a priori less likely than Intention 1, the revision is construed as evidence of 'will power'. The 'will' has apparently triumphed over a baser impulse. On the other hand, if Intention 1 is judged to be the higher, the longer-term or the less likely, and is replaced by a less creditable Intention 2, then the failure of the first prediction is interpreted as a 'failure' of will power. In each case, an updating of prediction is reframed as an inner battle between conflicting intentions — and as further evidence of the existence of the instigatory self.

Interestingly, Oatley and Johnson-Laird's (1987) elegant theory of the function of emotions argues for a similar cognitive economy. The basic 'negative' emotions such as fear, anger, sadness and disgust are, they argue, preparatory survival-based responses of the whole being to different, very general, classes of threat or plan-disruption, as revealed by a preliminary 'diagnosis' of the situation. Core emotions are, functionally, states of readiness of body and mind to correct aversive conditions

by fleeing (fear), fighting (anger), withdrawing (sadness) or expelling (disgust), depending on the threat diagnosis that has been given. But these primitive responses can, just as I have suggested here, be modified or inhibited in the light of wider considerations. A person feeling nauseous in a theatre may sit still and fight to control the urge to flee or vomit in order to avoid the alternative threat of social embarrassment, for example. Here again the flow of neural activation towards the construction of a response is bifurcated: one arm continues 'downstream' towards action-readiness; the other is diverted for more detailed analysis.

Expanding the Sense of Self

Why is intention experienced so strongly as a phenomenon of 'self'? Precisely because the self, in contemporary Euro-American cultures, is comprised of an intricate system of (largely conditioned) goals, interests, preferences and threats (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Whereas in many so-called traditional societies 'identity' has tended to inhere in a web of social roles, rituals, relationships and responsibilities (Sampson, 1993), the individualized, 'saturated self' (Gergen, 1991) of the West tends to constellate around a personalized set of traits and desire-systems. When this goal structure contains a burgeoning (and potentially conflicting) portfolio of likes and dislikes, identifying with these goal-states, and thus incorporating them within the 'self system', elevates them to the status of 'needs' and 'threats'. Consequently an increasing range of situations, even those that may look, on the surface, straightforward, may have to be read more carefully for motivational pitfalls and opportunities. Instead of the 'retarded' mode of cognition being intermittently useful, it tends to become the default, thus generating the conditions under which a continual array of conscious anticipations will emerge, some of which turn out to be accurate predictions and some of which do not.

Many of the considerations that contribute to this subliminal action-formulation-and-checking process do not themselves, as we have seen, feature in the conscious read-out of the situation. While the overall direction may be 'summed up' in a conscious prediction or 'intention', many of the contributory influences may be too weakly or fleetingly activated to make it directly into consciousness. Thus we may predict or intend, but not know why. We do not have access to the full causal story, especially when some of the factors are themselves faint, or may indeed be actively suppressed (as in the case, for example, of 'perceptual defence'). Dennett again points at this explanatory vacuum.

> The 'firing' of a retinal neuron, for instance, may be 'triggered' by the arrival of a single photon on a retinal receptor. Vast amounts of information arrive on the coattails of negligible amounts of energy, and then, thanks to the amplification powers of systems of switches, the information begins to do some work — evoking other information that was stored long ago, for instance, transmuting it for the present occasion in a million small ways, and leading eventually to an action whose pedigree of efficient (or triggering) causation is so hopelessly inscrutable as to be invisible. We see the dramatic effects leaving; we don't see the causes entering. . . . [Even] from our own first-person 'introspective' vantage point the causal paths are untraceable (1984, p. 77).

Having to answer the question 'Whodunnit?' with the lame — but accurate — response 'I dunno' feels very unsatisfactory, especially to human beings who have been enculturated to believe that conscious comprehension and control are central to their sense of identity. The 'folk' answer — a sleight-of-hand, but a comforting one — is to extend the sense of self to include a kind of dummy instigator who can fill the gap with claims of authorship. And how is the trick worked? By turning predictions into commands. Self-as-instigator is really a simple subroutine, added to the biocomputer, which does not affect the latter's modus operandi at all, but which simply takes the glimmerings of a naturally-arising prediction, and instantly generates a 'command' to bring about what was probably going to happen anyway. 'Faced with our inability to "see", by "introspection", where the centre or source of our free actions is, and loath to abandon our conviction that we really do things (for which we are responsible), we exploit the cognitive vacuum, the gaps in our self-knowledge, by filling it with a rather magical and mysterious entity, the unmoved mover, the active self,' summarizes Dennett.

In this light, Oliver Sacks' leg takes on a different significance. For a little while he was able — privileged, I would venture to say — to break the consensual Cartesian trance, to stand outside it and watch the folk model of self struggling to reassert itself. It is perhaps only in the context of the self's expectation of, and investment in, control, that Sacks' experience seems unusual and disconcerting. What is happening, on the alternative view, is that Sacks is enjoying a less interpreted, less enculturated, reality: one in which both the action *and* the 'intention' are experienced as arising from the unconscious biocomputer. What usually occurs is that intimations of actions, feelings, and thoughts themselves are received by the system of self-related goals, plans and interests, and, *if they fit in with that system*, are then represented in consciousness as if these intimations were the causes, the authors, the instigators of the impending act, rather than merely its accessories. What was happening to Oliver Sacks was that, while his sense of self had washed its hands of the leg (so to speak), the leg's movements, *and the intentions to move*, could not be experienced immediately as belonging to himself, but had to appear as if — as they in fact were — they were coming 'from out of the blue'.

A Concluding Comment: the Value of Relinquishing Control

Like the realization that the earth goes round the sun, and not vice versa, this reframing of 'will' appears less comforting, but is in fact more veridical, and therefore more functional. In both reframings of conventional wisdom, 'we' are displaced from the centre; in the first case, of the universe, in the second, of conscious control. A reappraisal of the human place in the scheme of things is required. In the case of free will, the human psyche must be acknowledged to be intrinsically more mysterious, more ineffable, than we have thought, or desired, it to be. But broadening the sense of identity to embrace the unconscious eco-bio-computer seems to offer concomitant benefits in terms of both creativity and equanimity. As both experimental and anecdotal evidence show overwhelmingly (Claxton, 1999), creativity and the productive use of intuition rely on the ability to relinquish conscious striving and control, and allow the mind to mull and meander, play and ponder. Earnest deliberation and too much pressure leave no room for insight, and the period of incubation that may precede it (Smith, 1995).

Indeed, the attempt to maintain a facade of consistency and control through conscious effort, sophistry and self-deception is itself debilitating. It is people who struggle most assiduously to maintain conscious control, and to suppress that which is quirky or unwanted, who tend to suffer from various neurotic and even psychotic disorders (Sass, 1994; Wells, 1998). Paradoxically, the acceptance that our minds are more wilful, wayward and whimsical — 'madder' — than we thought can bring an increase in sanity and peace. There are even suggestions from scurrilous seers and disreputable mystics that the eco-bio-computer, if we will let it, can be wiser than 'we' are.

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COSMIC CONSCIOUSNESS EXPERIENCE AND PSYCHEDELIC EXPERIENCES: A FIRST PERSON COMPARISON

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Abstract: The descriptions in the literature of mystical experience and psychedelic experience, such as that induced by LSD, are usually written by persons who have actually experienced only one or perhaps neither of the two states. Because many of the most important effects can be understood by direct experience but only partially described in ordinary language, such lack of direct experience is a major drawback. Since there is disagreement over the question of whether mystical experience and LSD experience can be 'the same', it would be helpful if an individual who has experienced aspects of both states would compare them. One of the authors (ALS) describes his experience with both states. A particular form of mystical experience, cosmic consciousness (CC), occurred spontaneously; no mind altering drugs were used. ALS later took LSD on 12–15 occasions. Both states of consciousness involved alterations in time sense, subject/object boundary, cognition, mood and perception. However, the changes with CC were qualitatively and quantitatively different from those of LSD. The authors conclude that CC and LSD can be quite different states of consciousness, although we cannot completely rule out the possibility that psychedelics might sometimes induce the same kinds of mystical experiences that occur for non-drug reasons.

The literature on states of consciousness contains descriptions of the phenomenology of both psychedelic experiences (Huxley, 1963; Tart, 1969; 1975) and mystical experiences (Bucke, 1961; Parrinder, 1976; Cohen & Phipps, 1979; James, 1925; Underhill, 1974). Some psychedelic experiences bear little resemblance to mystical consciousness, but the claim has been made that a few psychedelically induced experienees can be very similar to or perhaps identical with naturally occurring mystical experiences (Huxley, 1963). Other scholars deny this assertion (Zaehner, 1957).

Attempts to resolve the disagreement have been hampered by the fact that states of consciousness are notoriously difficult to describe and compare. Important aspects of these states may leave clear experiences as data in memory, but accurate verbal expression of these data in ordinary language is quite difficult and may be misleading. Further, it seems that almost all authors reporting these comparisons have not had first hand experience of *both* naturally occurring mystical states and chemically induced psychedelic states, and perhaps sometimes neither. For example, neither Huxley nor Zaehner claimed to have had a spontaneous mystical experience. In the only experimental comparison we know of, the well known Good Friday experiment, Pahnke (1966) studied the effects of psilocybin on volunteers in a religious setting. Insofar as mystical phenomena can be assessed by verbal descriptions on questionnaires, the psilocybin group experienced a significantly greater incidence of mystical-like phenomena, including unity, transcendence of time and space, and deep positive mood. Pahnke and Richards (1969) believed that psilocybin induced a 'drug facilitated mystical consciousness.' However, neither authors nor subjects had experienced spontaneous mystical consciousness. Similarly, Grof (1976) has had extensive experience with LSD psychotherapy, but not natural mysticism. Even so,

he believes that LSD psychotherapy offers a genuine key to transpersonal realms. We would agree that psychedelics can open a person to experiences of a transpersonal nature, but that is not the same as equating a mystical experience like cosmic consciousness with psychedelically induced experiences.

Both of these altered states consist largely and importantly of experiences that are observable only to the individual having them. Although there may be communication difficulties, we think it would be an important contribution, based more on data than on mere verbal inference, if a person who had experienced both mystical and psychedelic states of consciousness would report on their phenomenology and compare them. This paper reports the experiences of one of the authors (ALS) with a profound mystical state once and with psychedelically induced states numerous times. We use the singular pronoun 'I' for ALS's descriptions. The other author (CTT) is familiar with psychedelically induced and other altered states and has worked with ALS to clarify his account. The plural pronoun 'we' represents our joint thinking about the material of this article.

The term 'mystical experience' is used in many different senses by reporters and investigators of various religious and metaphysical doctrines. Moreover, many different phenomena have been termed 'mystical' (Stace, 1960; Underhill, 1974). The present report is concerned only with one specific type of mystical experience, which was termed cosmic consciousness (CC) by the nineteenth century physician Robert Maurice Bucke (1961). For Bucke, CC referred to an experience of the ground of being: 'The prime characteristic of cosmic consciousness is, as the name implies, a consciousness of the cosmos, that is, of the life and order of the universe' (Bucke 1961, p. 2). We include Bucke's classic account of his own CC experience in the Appendix. James (1925) and Huxley (1944) discussed a similar phenomenon, but usually used different terminology. For these three investigators, CC denotes a state of consciousness characterized by a cluster of phenomena including (1) passivity, (2) transience, (3) unity, (4) knowingness and (5) ineffability. Passivity means that the subject does not voluntarily control CC. Transience refers to the observation that CC is rarely sustained for longer than a half hour or at most an hour or two (James, 1925, p. 381). Unity is the experience that subject and object merge into one seamless whole. Sense of separate self weakens or dissolves. Knowingness refers to a direct insight into the nature of reality that is self validating: '. . . as a rule they [the experiences] carry with them a curious sense of authority for after-time' (James, 1925, p. 381). Subjects of CC say that the state is ineffable. It is completely different from other states of consciousness and cannot be completely and adequately described either in words or by metaphor. Some or all of the characteristics resembling those described above may occur in deep meditation states, but this report does not address the question of how those states relate to CC.

The intent of this report is to compare the phenomenology of two conditions of consciousness, a series induced by LSD and a naturally occurring incident of CC. Its unique contribution is that the comparison is made by an individual who has experienced both states, so that he can compare phenomena, rather than merely words about phenomena. Our goal is to be as fully descriptive as possible, since these better quality data are an essential foundation for further understanding, and it is not within our scope to present an exhaustive analysis of CC or LSD in terms of the psychology of perception or cognition.

Experiencer's Personal Background

A few comments on my personal background follow. I was raised in a traditionally religious household, where I learned that God was both demanding and vengeful. Throughout most of my childhood my relation to God consisted of a mixture of guilt and fear. I had very little exposure to other traditions and therefore little chance to explore other thought systems until I entered university. There I was influenced by people who seemed (to an impressionable eighteen-year old) quite sophisticated and bright, but did not believe in God at all. The thought of Jean-Paul Sartre was very much in vogue and by the end of my freshman year I had become an atheistic existentialist. Such a rapid 'deconversion' was surely facilitated by a strong late adolescent reaction against orthodox religion. I was angry that I had been deceived by my parents and teachers into believing a collection of fairy tales about the existence of an imaginary God who had made my childhood so miserable. The anger gradually faded over the years, but had not quite dissipated when I experienced CC at age 38. By that time religion had no place in my life at all. I was an academic researcher, scientist and materialist. I was not interested in nor was I searching for any sort of transcendent or supernatural experience. I had no idea of what a mystical experience was.

At the time of the CC event I had never taken a psychedelic drug, but did have some previous experience with marijuana in social settings. It might be worthwhile to comment on the profundity of those experiences. Tart has reported a detailed analysis of the subjective effects of marijuana in experienced users who are educated westerners at seven levels of intoxication varying from 'just stoned' through 'maximally stoned' (Tart, 1971). My own experiences rarely exceeded Tart's middle level, which does not include experiences that might be loosely called mystical. Table 1 details some of the effects that I did and did not experience. I have given only a general outline of my level of marijuana effects, as my memory would not be accurate enough to warrant a detailed presentation in terms of Tart's criteria. (Note that my feelings about the inadequacy of my memory for long ago events in connection with marijuana intoxication are quite different from my feelings about complete and accurate recall of my CC experience.) Before the CC event, I was not very sophisticated in the realm of drug altered states of consciousness. I had no experience of those high level marijuana effects such as merging or loss of body consciousness that are reminiscent

Table 1: Subjective Marijuana Effects

Modality	Medium-level effects experienced by ALS	High-level effects not experienced by ALS
vision	visual imagery more vivid	hallucination
hearing	quality of own voice changes	synesthesia
taste	enjoy eating more	taste broken into components
time	time passes more slowly	actions have archetypal quality
body	sexual orgasm more pleasurable	lose consciousness of body
social	giggle a lot	merge with others
cognitive	more here-and-now	lose control of thought

of CC. I had experienced no drug effects that resembled CC. It is not likely, therefore, that my marijuana experiences could have suggested or prompted the CC experiences.

Cosmic Consciousness Experience

My CC event occurred unexpectedly while I was alone one evening and was watching a particularly beautiful sunset. I was sitting in an easy chair placed next to floor-to-ceiling windows that faced northwest. The sun was above the horizon and was partially veiled by scattered clouds, so that it was not uncomfortably bright. I had not used any marijuana for about a week previously. On the previous evening I probably had wine with dinner; I do not remember the quantity, but two glasses would have been typical. Thus, we would not have expected any residual drug effects.

The CC experience began with some mild tingling in the perineal area, the region between the genitals and anus. The feeling was unusual, but was neither particularly pleasant nor unpleasant. After the initial few minutes, I either ceased to notice the tingling or did not remember it. I then noticed that the level of light in the room as well as that of the sky outside seemed to be increasing slowly. The light seemed to be coming from everywhere, not only from the waning sun. In fact, the sun itself did not give off a strong glare. The light gave the air a bright thickened quality that slightly obscured perception rather than sharpened it. It soon became extremely bright, but the light was not in the least unpleasant.

Along with the light came an alteration in mood. I began to feel very good, then still better, then elated. While this was happening, the passage of time seemed to become slower and slower. The brightness, mood-elevation, and time-slowing all progressed together. It is difficult to estimate the time period over which these changes occurred, since the sense of time was itself affected. However, there was a feeling of continuous change, rather than a discrete jump or jumps to a new state. Eventually, the sense of time passing stopped entirely. It is difficult to describe this feeling, but perhaps it would be better to say that there was no time, or no sense of time. Only the present moment existed. My elation proceeded to an ecstatic state, the intensity of which I had never even imagined could be possible. The white light around me merged with the reddish light of the sunset to become one all enveloping, intense undifferentiated light field. Perception of other things faded. Again, the changes seemed to be continuous.

At this point, I merged with the light and everything, including myself, became one unified whole. There was no separation between myself and the rest of the universe. In fact, to say that there was a universe, a self, or any 'thing' would be misleading — it would be an equally correct description to say that there was 'nothing' as to say that there was 'everything'. To say that subject merged with object might be almost adequate as a description of the entrance into CC, but during CC there was neither 'subject' nor 'object'. All words or discursive thinking had stopped and there was no sense of an 'observer' to comment or to categorize what was 'happening'. In fact, there were no discrete events to 'happen' — just a timeless, unitary state of being.

CC is impossible to describe, partly because describing involves words and the state is one in which there were no words. My attempts at description here originated from reflecting on CC soon after it had passed and while there was still some 'taste'

Perhaps the most significant element of CC was the absolute knowingness that it involves. This knowingness is a deep understanding that occurs without words. I was certain that the universe was one whole and that it was benign and loving at its ground. Bucke's experience was similar. He knew, '. . . that the universe is so built and ordered that without any peradventure all things work together for the good of each and all, that the foundation principle of the world is what we call love and that the happiness of every one is in the long run absolutely certain' (Bucke, 1961, p. 8).

The benign nature and ground of being, with which I was united, was God. However, there is little relation between my experience of God as ground of being and the anthropomorphic God of the Bible. That God is separate from the world and has many human characteristics. 'He' demonstrates love, anger and vengeance, makes demands, gives rewards, punishes, forgives, etc. God as experienced in CC is the very ground or 'beingness' of the universe and has no human characteristics in the usual sense of the word. The universe could no more be separate from God than my body could be separate from its cells. Moreover, the only emotion that I would associate with God is love, but it would be more accurate to say that God is love than God is loving. Again, even characterizing God as love and the ground of being is only a metaphor, but it is the best that I can do to describe an indescribable experience.

The knowingness of CC permanently convinced me about the true nature of the universe. However, it did not answer many of the questions that (quite rightly) seem so important to us in our usual state of consciousness. From the perspective of CC, questions like, 'What is the purpose of life?' or 'Is there an afterlife?' are not answered because they are not relevant. That is, during CC ontologic questions are fully answered by one's state of being and verbal questions are not to the point.

Eventually, the CC faded. The time-changes, light, and mood-elevation passed off. When I was able to think again, the sun had set and I estimate that the event must have lasted about twenty minutes. Immediately following return to usual consciousness, I cried uncontrollably for about a half hour. I cried both for joy and for sadness, because I knew that my life would never be the same.

Long-term Effects of Cosmic Consciousness

CC had a major impact on the course of my life. I had received a national prize for my research and had a grant funded for five years, but any interest I had in becoming a famous academician evaporated. My research seemed more like an interesting puzzle than work of immense importance to the world. I left my secure and successful university faculty position and supported myself as a part-time freelance clinician. I needed time to explore spirituality and to integrate the CC experience into my life. Those explorations included theology, psychology, mysticism, eastern religion, parapsychology, consciousness studies and holistic health. Eventually, I earned a M.A. in Consciousness Studies and another in Theology. Since CC, I have not had a 'career' in the usual sense of the word.

One important after-effect of CC that I soon discovered was the ability to create a subtle shift in consciousness. By quieting myself within, my inner mental chatter almost stopped and I became calm and present centered. Perception of the world and myself were both especially clear. The world seemed benign and 'right' with everything as it was 'supposed to be'. There was a great sense of inner peace. As the

passed since CC, my ability to attain this state at will has diminished. When it does occur, it seems less profound than previously. I am personally very sad at this loss.

CC did not make me into an instant saint or enlightened being. I still occasionally lose my temper, worry, judge people, and need ego support. But from the time immediately following CC there were lasting personality changes. My general anxiety level was considerably reduced and remains low. I do not (usually) strive at living, but truly enjoy it. When I do 'lose it', there is a subtle way in which I can mentally 'step back' and see the real significance (or lack thereof) of whatever disturbed me. I have not been able to return to CC, although I have a real longing to do so. However, I can usually recall enough of the experience to know that the world is benign and that my ordinary conscious phenomenal experience can only hint at the true nature of reality.

The CC experience occurred in 1976. I did not make any notes until about a month later. Unfortunately, those original notes are lost. Even so, I feel quite confident that my memory of the essential aspects of CC is accurate. There are several reasons for this belief. (1) The CC experience was the most powerful event of my life and such a momentous experience is not possible to forget. (2) From the early weeks afterwards, I compared my experience to published accounts of CC. The comparisons constitute an independent way to stabilize the memory. (3) I frequently review the experience as a technique to achieve inner peace. (4) My remembered accounts are similar to the accounts reported in the literature (see below). In addition, many other CC experiencers have reported that their experiences have remained fresh after the passage of many years (James, 1925; Bucke, 1961). We cannot claim that memory is infallible and the long period between the events and the report is unfortunate. However, we do believe it very likely that the above phenomenal report has not been significantly distorted by the passage of time. Furthermore, my belief that my memory is accurate is data: CC produces that feeling.

Psychedelic Experience

My experience with psychedelic drugs is almost entirely limited to about 12-15 'trips' with LSD. I took my first trip about a month after CC. Part of my original motivation for tripping was the supposed 'mystical' nature of LSD. I had hoped to recapture CC, but never did so. The drugs were obtained from various sources and the purity and exact dosage were not determined. However, I have no reason to believe that there was significant contamination of the drugs. Comparing my experiences with those of other LSD experimenters leads me to believe that the doses I used were sufficient to generate a full range of what my colleagues considered the usual LSD effects. Most of my 'trips' were taken with a small group of friends (usually other professional people) either at home or in a quiet natural setting. The description below is a composite of my LSD experiences.

My first sign that LSD effects were beginning was a bodily feeling that was somewhere between a deep shivering from within the muscles and a crawling feeling in the skin. It was not localized, but seemed to be throughout the body. I have usually found it to be mildly unpleasant, but it passes within ten to fifteen minutes. The other effects, described below, came on slowly over a period of about an hour.

Time seemed to slow down, but never stopped.

Perceptual changes were very prominent. With the eyes closed, there were colourful kaleidoscope-like light shows. With the eyes opened, coloured patterns occasionally appeared on walls. Sometimes, actually existing spots or patterns appeared to move about. Colour intensity was greatly heightened and objects stood out with great clarity. My mood varied during an LSD trip. It could be anywhere from mildly depressed or even frightened to moderately elevated or 'high'. Typically, at the peak of the experience, my mood was extremely positive. I have never had a 'bad trip' i.e. one in which negative emotions were prolonged or very severe. The next section contains additional comments about mood elevation.

There was sometimes an experience of a wordless significance of certain objects. Often, these were quite ordinary things, like the pattern of a carpet or the cover of a book. I may have passed an inordinate time absorbed in the beauty of one of these objects. At times, the wordless significance extended to life itself. I have felt, for example, that a certain flower had great meaning for my life. Sometimes, there was even a feeling of merging with one of these objects or even with everything around me. However, my sense of self was never completely absent. The inner observer and inner dialogue were always readily available, even though they may have been diminished or even absent for brief periods. By 'readily available' I mean the following. I may not have experienced my sense of separate self for short periods during an LSD trip, but at some wordless level I knew that I was having as experience and that my 'self' could be recovered.

Comparison and Comments: Personal/Phenomenologic Approach

In my experience and consistent with what we can learn from the scattered literature, CC is a specific constellation of phenomena and the instance we report is quite typical. My experience had each of the major 'diagnostic' criteria proposed by James (1925, pp. 380–1) and/or Bucke (1961, pp. 60–3):

1) *ineffability* — inability to be described adequately in words
2) *noetic quality* — absolute certainly about the truth of the experience
3) *transience* — it lasted only about twenty minutes
4) *unity* — sense of the universe as a single whole
5) *passivity* — not controlled by the subject

I also experienced immersion in bright light that clouded perception and ecstatic emotional state, both of which are characteristic of CC, but not seen in every case. My experience of time slowing and stopping is not described explicitly by Bucke, but some of his subjects reported a 'sense of eternity' or immortality, which seems similar. In summary, my mystical experience is obviously characterizable as an instance of 'classical' CC.

LSD experience, by contrast, is defined as what follows drug ingestion rather than by a specific constellation of phenomena. The phenomenology is quite variable, but my experiences are clearly similar to those reported in the literature. The major effects on visual perception, time-perception, mood, and ego-sense have all been well described and will not be repeated here (Downing, 1969; Mogar, 1965).

There are numerous apparent similarities between LSD and CC. However, based on my personal experience, I believe that they are two very different 'states' of consciousness. As discussed previously, words generally fail adequately to describe

states of consciousness, but I shall endeavour to articulate the differences between the two kinds of experience. We do believe that appropriate words can evoke useful knowledge in the reader with some similar experience, even if words cannot completely capture and define these experiential realities.

I do not place much significance on either the shivering during LSD onset or the tingling that preceded CC. These were physical sensations and were clearly different phenomenologically. The perineal tingling may remind one of so-called kundalini experience, but is not typical of a full-blown kundalini phenomenon. The sensation was located anterior to (in front of) the base of the spine and did not move up the spine as kundalini is reported to do (Sanella, 1987).

Visual or light effects were associated with both LSD and CC, but they were very different. During the LSD experience colours were perceived more intensely and objects seemed to stand out. Clarity of perception was generally enhanced. With CC, the light was intensified, but perception was greatly diminished. In fact, there was no actual perception because there was nothing (i.e. no objects) to be perceived. With the exception of the light, I do not recall seeing or hearing anything during CC. There were no 'events'.

The mood changes were both quantitatively and qualitatively different. During LSD intoxication, my mood was brittle. A 'high' state could be rapidly converted to a depressed one and vice versa. In my own experience, the mood swings were infrequent. In contrast, the CC mood elevation was constant, solid and all-pervasive. It was so intense that the words 'joy' and 'high' fail to capture the experience.

The mood elevation of CC and a positive LSD peak not only differ in intensity, but have a different feel. I would describe the LSD experience as 'high' and CC as 'ecstatic'. The best verbal description that I can give for the difference between the two is the extent of associated ego loss. However, there are other ineffable differences. An example may help clarify my use of these terms.

Table 2 shows the words I would use to describe a spectrum of positive experiences. I have also included some states that could be described by the term 'joy'. The numbers in Table 2 indicate the relative intensity (in my experience) for each mood term in the spectrum. 'Joy', 'high', and 'ecstatic' describe qualitatively different feeling states, with overlap among them. When I receive good news, I am joyful and fully aware of my separate self. There is some slight weakening of the ego feeling when newly in love and there is a further loosening in the 'high' of recreational drugs.

Table 2: Descriptors of Positive Emotional States

joy	*high*	*ecstatic*	emotional condition
1	x	x	good news about personal life
3	1	x	being newly in love
5	3	x	LSD, marijuana
x	8	1	average orgasm
x	x	4	best orgasm of my life
x	x	40	Cosmic Consciousness (CC)

'Joy' and 'high' are both applicable to these last two conditions. An orgasm involves more ego loss and could be described as ecstatic. In an extremely intense orgasm, ego sense is reduced to the point where there is 'nobody' to feel high. The French epithet 'la petite mort' (the little death) affirms the weakened sense of self. Using this quantitative analogy, CC is an order of magnitude more ecstatic than the best orgasm.

My intention in the preceding example was to use words to point towards the differences in feeling state between LSD and CC. It is not to be taken as an attempt at a general classification of positive states

I noted above that in contrast to LSD there was no verbal experience during CC. This is an important difference between the two conditions of consciousness. I suspect that lack of words also contributed to the apparent loss of subjectivity during the unitive experience of CC. Although the word 'merging' was used in the descriptions of both states of consciousness, the experiences were not the same. (There is no adequate word to describe either experience or the difference between them, but I will try to do so.) The experience of merging under the influence of LSD was still an experience. That is, even though there may have been blurring of the subject/object distinction, there was usually still a person present to whom some thing could happen. On a few occasions, the sense of self was absent, but the absence was not nearly as 'complete' or 'deep' as that of CC. As noted above, the 'self' was never far away with LSD, but was totally beyond recall with CC.

Although I have used the word 'experience' in the description of CC, it may be misleading. There could be no sense of an experience happening to 'me', because there was no sense of a separate me. During CC, there was just *being*, as opposed to *experiencing*. I *was the* '*being*' during CC, but 'I' *had an experience* during LSD. In summary, the 'merging' that occurs with CC is qualitatively different from that of LSD.

The feeling of knowingness is also different. With LSD there was an apparent comprehension of relations with persons or objects and an apparent understanding of their significance. This knowingness is in the realm of deep feelings, not words. During CC, the knowingness is quantitatively greater in that it extends beyond individuals to encompass everything. It is also qualitatively different in feel. Its level of surety is so much greater that the insights of CC cannot be doubted. From the point of view of my present 'ordinary rational' state, I can understand that a person who had never experienced CC might think that my experience was an illusion. However, I have no doubts whatsoever of its truth. I could be more easily convinced that the computer at which I now sit is illusory than I could be convinced that CC was.

A final but important difference between knowingness of the two states of consciousness is in the evaluation of the knowingness after return to ordinary waking consciousness. It has been said that an LSD trip can be important to one's life because it demonstrates the fact that reality may be much more than we ordinarily experience. This may be so. However, the wordless experiences of meaning or significance that I experienced during LSD had nowhere near the value to me that CC did. Many of the LSD experiences that seemed significant at the time turned out to have no lasting value at all. For example, I recall a great 'revelation' about beauty that I received during an LSD trip when absorbed in the pattern of plant leaves. The next day, the leaves were nothing but ordinary leaves with no unusual significance and I had learned nothing new about beauty. On the other hand, my experience of CC changed

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an important after-effect for some people. It may not have been so important to me because I experienced the more profound CC first.

There are reports in the literature suggesting that states resembling CC can be obtained with LSD. For example, Masters and Houston (1966) classified the 'depth' of LSD experience attained by experimental subjects into several levels. They found that 11% of the subjects could be guided to a level in which they experienced effects like dissolution of ego or union with the ground of being. Their work is extremely valuable as a description of LSD effects, but was done (to the best of our knowledge) by people who had not personally experienced spontaneous CC. Although it has some usefulness in comparing CC and LSD, it lacks the fundamental basis of one person being able to refer to both experiences. In my own experience, 'merging' and 'ego loss' was sometimes present with LSD, but was qualitatively different from that of CC, even though the same words are used (inadequately) to describe it.

It is significant that I did not experience CC with LSD, although I wanted very much to do so. The phenomenon of 'reverse tolerance' should have made the experience of CC even more likely. It has been observed that inexperienced marijuana users often do not get 'high' easily, even with relatively large doses. (Tart, 1975, p. 152) But, once they have learned to experience the states of consciousness available with a particular drug, they can do so with relatively small doses. In Tart's systems approach (Tart, 1975) to understanding altered states and their induction processes, previous experience of a particular altered state also makes it much easier for the induction process to destabilize the baseline state and repattern consciousness into the desired altered state. Since I had experienced both CC and LSD, and since I was highly motivated to re-experience CC, I should have been able to achieve CC with my later LSD trips, if it were available to LSD users. Failure to do so is consistent with the assertion that CC is not a usual LSD phenomenon. However, one could always argue that my LSD trips were just not profound enough.

Conclusion

A phenomenologic description of LSD and CC states has been given by an individual who has experienced both of these. Comparison and analysis of the descriptions support the conclusion that these are different states of consciousness.

It is likely that there are others who have experienced both CC and LSD. Their experiences may be similar to those reported here or may differ in some aspects. The authors would appreciate hearing from any such people who are willing to share and compare their experiences of CC and LSD. It would be particularly interesting if one of these dual experiencers could report having had a true CC experience during an LSD altered state of consciousness (d-ASC). We encourage these individuals to publish accounts of their experiences. If they do not wish to do so, we would appreciate permission to collect and publish the accounts ourselves. The combined experiences of a number of people would make a valuable report.

We are aware of no other reports in the literature in which a single individual compares the subjective phenomena of CC and a psychedelic d-ASC. For this reason, the present report should be very useful, but the addition of others' experiences may add to or alter the final picture. It would also be very interesting to find individuals

Appendix

R.M. Bucke's Description of His[1] Cosmic Consciousness Experience

It was in the early spring at the beginning of his thirty-sixth year. He and two friends had spent the evening reading Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, Browning, and especially Whitman. They parted at midnight, and he had a long drive in a hansom (it was in an English city). His mind deeply under the influences of the ideas, images and emotions called up by the reading and talk of the evening, was calm and peaceful. He was in a state of quiet, almost passive enjoyment. All at once, without warning of any kind, he found himself wrapped around as it were by a flame colored cloud. For an instant he thought of fire, some sudden conflagration in the great city, the next he knew that the light was within himself. Directly afterwards came upon him a sense of exultation, of immense joyousness, accompanied or immediately followed by an intellectual illumination quite impossible to describe. Into his brain streamed one momentary lightning-flash of the Brahmic Splendor which has ever since lightened his life; upon his heart fell one drop of Brahmic Bliss, leaving thenceforward for always an after taste of heaven. Among other things he did not come to believe, he saw and knew that the Cosmos is not dead matter but a living Presence, that the soul of man is immortal, that the universe is so built and ordered that without any peradventure all things work together for the good of each and all, that the foundation principle of the world is what we call love and that the happiness of every one is in the long run absolutely certain. He claims that he learned more within the few seconds during which the illumination lasted that in previous months or even years of study, and that he learned much that no study could ever have taught.

The illumination itself continued not more than a few moments, but its effects proved ineffaceable; it was impossible for him ever to forget what he at that time saw and knew, neither did he, or could he, ever doubt the truth of what was then presented to his mind (Bucke, 1961, pp. 7–8).

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WHAT DOES MYSTICISM HAVE TO TEACH US ABOUT CONSCIOUSNESS?*

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Introduction: Why Mysticism?

One of the most exciting aspects of this journal, of which I am proud to be an executive editor, is that it has become a venue in which so many distinct fields can interact on a single question, that of consciousness. I know of no other question, or journal, which has brought together so many voices, from so many fields, to swirl around a single topic. It is exciting both to provide a forum and to be a part of this debate.

In this article I would like to bring the findings of my somewhat unusual but increasingly accepted field — mysticism— to the discussion, for I think they may offer some helpful insights about consciousness. Why? When a biologist seeks to understand a complex phenomenon, one key strategy is to look to at it in its simplest form. Probably the most famous is the humble bacterium *E. coli*. Its simple gene structure has allowed us to understand much of the gene functioning of complex species. Similarly many biologists have turned to the 'memory' of the simple sea slug to understand our own more kaleidoscopic memory. Freud and Durkheim both used totemism, which they construed as the simplest form of religion, to understand the complexities of religious life.[1] The methodological principle is: to understand something complex turn to its simple forms.

Mystical experiences may represent just such a simple form of human consciousness. Usually our minds are an enormously complex stew of thoughts, feelings, sensations, wants, snatches of song, pains, drives, daydreams and, of course, consciousness itself more or less aware of it all. To understand consciousness *in itself*, the obvious thing would be to clear away as much of this internal detritus and noise as possible. It turns out that mystics seem to be doing precisely that. The technique that most mystics use is some form of meditation or contemplation. These are procedures that, often by recycling a mental subroutine,[2] systematically reduce mental activity. During meditation, one begins to slow down the thinking process, and have fewer or less intense thoughts. One's thoughts become as if more distant, vague, or less preoccupying; one stops paying as much attention to bodily sensations; one has fewer or less intense fantasies and daydreams. Thus by reducing the intensity or compelling quality of outward perception and inward thoughts, one may come to a time of greater stillness. Ultimately one may become utterly silent inside, as though in a gap between thoughts, where one becomes completely perception- and thought-free. One neither thinks nor perceives any mental or sensory content. Yet, despite this suspension of content, one emerges from such events confident that one had remained

* An earlier version was given at the conference, *Toward a Science of Consciousness*, Tucson, Arizona, April 1996.

[1] I am indebted to the psychologist of religion William Parsons, in a private communication, for this observation.

[2] See here Ornstein (1976).

awake inside, fully conscious. This experience, which has been called the pure consciousness event, or PCE, has been identified in virtually every tradition. Though PCEs typically happen to any single individual only occasionally, they are quite regular for some practitioners.[3] The pure consciousness event may be defined as a wakeful but contentless (non-intentional) consciousness.

These PCEs, encounters with consciousness devoid of intentional content, may be just the least complex encounter with awareness *per se* that we students of consciousness seek. The PCE may serve, in short, as the *E. coli* of consciousness studies.[4]

But the story does not stop here. Regular and long-term meditation, according to many traditions, leads to advanced experiences, known in general as 'enlightenment'. Their discriminating feature is a deep shift in epistemological structure: the experienced relationship between the self and one's perceptual objects changes profoundly. In many people this new structure becomes permanent.[5]

These long-term shifts in epistemological structure often take the form of two quantum leaps in experience; typically they develop sequentially.[6] The first is an experience of a permanent interior stillness, even while engaged in thought and activity — one remains aware of one's own awareness while simultaneously remaining conscious of thoughts, sensations and actions. Because of its phenomenological dualism — a heightened cognizance of awareness itself plus a consciousness of thoughts and objects — I call it the dualistic mystical state (DMS). The second shift is described as a perceived unity of one's own awareness *per se* with the objects around one, an immediate sense of a quasi-physical unity between self, objects and other people. States akin to this have been called 'extrovertive-' or sometimes 'nature-' mysticism; but I prefer to call it the unitive mystical state, UMS.[7]

Like the PCE, these latter two may serve as fertile fields for students of consciousness to plough. To understand them, I want to introduce the idea of the *relative intensity* of a thought or desire. Some desires have a high relative intensity. Let's say I am walking across the street when I see a huge truck hurtling at me. Virtually 100% of my attention is taken up with the truck, the fear, and getting out of the way. It is virtually impossible for me to think about anything else at that time. I don't even consider keeping my suit clean, how my hair might look, the discomfort in my

[3] See the articles in Forman (1990) and Section I of Forman (1998).

[4] Bruce Mangan (1994) suggests this when he says that 'mystic[al] encounters . . . would seem to manifest an extreme state of consciousness' (p. 251).

[5] James' famous characterization of mysticism in *The Varieties of Religious Experience* states that a defining feature of mysticism is 'transiency' (James, 1902/1983, p. 381). My evidence says this is simply wrong.

[6] I say typically because sometimes one may skip or not attain a particular stage. Ken Wilber (1980) claims sequence. William Barnard (1995), however, disputes this claim of sequence.

[7] One key element of the UMS is that it is a *permanent* shift in the structure of awareness. 'Extrovertive' mysticism, a term coined by W.P. Stace, implies that one has mystical experiences out in the world, while we are 'extrovertively' aware. Zaehner coined the term 'nature mysticism' to describe such paths as Zen or Taoism, which describe mystical experiences in nature. This he distinguishes from the theistic traditions, among others. But in the UMS, as I understand this form of life, the sense of being in contact with the expansive emptiness that extends beyond the self, *never* fades away, whether one is in nature or in the city, whether the eyes are open or closed, and whether one is a Zen Buddhist, a Jew or a Christian. Thus each of these accepted terms define this experience too narrowly, and thus I coin my own broader term.

tummy, or the classes I will teach tomorrow. The fear and running are *utterly* intense, we might say, consuming nearly 100% of my attention.

That evening, I come home starved, and rush to the fridge. I may be civil to my kids and wife, but I have very little patience. My desire for food is very intense, for it preoccupies most of my consciousness, but it consumes less of my attention than did jumping away from the truck.

Some thoughts consume very little of my attention. Driving to work the next day, for example, I might ruminate about my classes, remember the near miss with the truck, half hear the news on the radio, and think about getting that noise in the car fixed — nearly all at once. None of these thoughts or desires is very intense, for none has a strong emotional cathexis that draws me fully into it. My attention can flow in and out of any of them, or the traffic ahead, effortlessly. In short the intensity of a thought or desire tends to increase with the amount of my consciousness that is taken up with that thought or feeling. Conversely, the thought's intensity tends to lessen when I am able to retain more attention for other issues, and for my wider perspective.

Now, as I understand them, advanced mystical experiences result from the combination of regular PCEs plus a minimization of the relative intensity of emotions and thoughts. That is, over time one decreases the compulsive or intense cathexis value of *all* of one's desires. The de-intensifying of emotional attachments means that, over the years, one's attention is progressively available to sense its own quiet interior character more and more fully, until eventually one is able to effortlessly maintain a subtle cognizance of one's own awareness simultaneously with thinking about and responding to the world: a reduction in the relative intensity of *all* of one's thoughts and desires.

This state of being cognizant of one's own inner awareness while simultaneously maintaining the ability to think and talk about that consciousness offers students of consciousness a unique situation. For these subjects may be both unusually cognizant of features or patterns of their own awareness and also able to describe them to us: a kind of ongoing microscope on human consciousness. In short, while not as phenomenologically simple as PCEs, these experiences may provide us with highly useful reports about the character of human awareness.

Several additional preliminary matters: First, perforce we will be drawing conclusions based on the experiences of a very few people. Most of us haven't had any experiences like the ones I will describe, and some may sound pretty strange. Yet we often do generalize from the unusual to the general. Just think how much we have concluded about consciousness from a very few: epileptics, people with unusual skull accidents or brain injuries, the man who mistook his wife for a hat, etc. From the *pathology* of a very few we have learned a great deal about the relationship of one side of the brain to the other, of two kinds of knowing, of information storage and retrieval, of impulse control, etc. Indeed it is common practice to take data about a few unusual individuals and generalize it to the many. Here again we are studying the data of a few. But rather than the pathological, we will be studying people — Teresa of Avila, Vasubandu, Ramana Maharshi, etc. — who are not 'pathological' but unusually self-actualized.

Should we not be as willing to learn from the experiences of the unusually healthy as we are to learn from the unusually diseased?

The second matter is definitional: What do we mean by mysticism? What is generally known as mysticism is often said to have two strands, which are traditionally distinguished as *apophatic* and *kataphatic* mysticism, oriented respectively towards emptying or imagistically filling. These two are generally described in terms that are *without* or *with* sensory language. The psychologist Roland Fischer has distinguished a similar pairing as *trophotropic* and *ergotropic*, experiences that phenomenologically involve inactivity or activity. *Kataphatic* or imagistic mysticism involves hallucinations, visions, auditions or even a sensory-like smell or taste; it thus involves activity and is *ergotropic*. *Apophatic* mystical experiences are devoid of such sensory-like content, and are thus *trophotropic*. When they use non-sensory, non-imagistic language (cf. Smart, 1982), authors like Eckhart, Dogen, al-Hallaj, Bernadette Roberts and Shankara are all thus *apophatic* mystics. Because visions and other ergotropic experiences are not the simple experiences of consciousness that we require, I will focus my attentions exclusively on the quieter *apophatic* forms.

Finally, I want to emphasize that phenomenology is not science. When we describe these experiences, we do not gain hard scientific proof thereby. There can be many ways to explain an unusual experience: one might say it was the result of what one ate for dinner, a faulty memory, psycho-somatic processes, a quantum microtubule collapse, or an encounter with Ultimate Truth.[8] Without further argumentation, phenomenology cannot serve as the sole basis for any theory of reality. It may be taken only as a finger, *pointing* in some direction, rather than *conclusive evidence* for or against a particular thesis. This is how I see my role in this paper. I will simply describe mystical experiences as accurately as I can, and say where I see their fingers pointing. That is, I will attempt to coax metaphysical hypotheses out of these phenomenological descriptions.

First-person reports, especially those that are about unusual experiences are, of course, notoriously unreliable. When an epileptic says that 'the table seemed wavy', or when a man asserts that his wife is a 'hat', these reports are not taken as data about the world, but about their condition.[9] One may want to assert that a mystic's report should be regarded similarly.

But we must be careful here, for first-person reports can also be veridical or even sources of wisdom. For example, in the kingdom of the blind, the 'first-person' report of a sighted fellow that 'the mountain peak near the village is in the shape of five fingers' may be regarded as the rantings of a lunatic or as information about the mountains. Similarly, when Woodward and Bernstein spoke with the Watergate informant 'Deep Throat', they could have taken his utterances as paranoid ramblings, data about his developing psychosis, or as information about the Nixon administration.

How can we determine which way to regard the unusual first-person reports of the mystics? If we were Woodward and Bernstein, how would we decide? Common sense seems a good place to begin. We might ask, does Deep Throat, or the mystics in our case, *seem* unconnected or delusional? I believe most of us would say no. In fact many regard Meister Eckhart, Teresa of Avila, the authors of the Upanishads, and others who tell us of such experiences as unusually wise. Certainly they do not seem utterly unhinged, physically ill, etc. Secondly, we might ask, do others in a

[8] These may not be mutually exclusive. See, for example, neurologist Oliver Sacks' comments on migraines and mysticism in the case of Hildegard of Bingen (Sacks, 1994, pp. 238–9).

[9] I am grateful for Joseph Goguen, private communication, for articulating this question so clearly.

situation similar to Deep Throat's describe things similarly? In our case, assuming reasonable cultural differences in language and detail, do mystics from around the world describe things largely similarly? Here again the answer is yes. We shall find a reasonable amount of similarity among their descriptions, a family resemblance, They tend to confirm each others reports. Finally, is there other confirming evidence for our Deep Throats' claims? Here the information is not in: just how consciousness works, relates to the world or the brain, is anything but established.

In sum, it makes sense to regard the mystics' unusual reports about the world as more like those of a Deep Throat than those of an epileptic. But also, again as with Deep Throat, the information we can glean from them is not, by itself, reliable enough to base a theory of consciousness solely on it. It will take the hard-working Woodwards and Bernsteins in the scientific and philosophical trenches to verify or deny the suggestions of our Deep Throats.

Three Mystical Phenomena and their Implications

Pure consciousness events

Let me begin by offering several reports of the first of the mystical phenomena I mentioned above, the pure consciousness event (PCE). First, from Christian mystical literature,[10] St. Teresa of Avila writes of what she calls the 'orison of union':

> During the short time the union lasts, she is deprived of every feeling, and even if she would, she could not think of any single thing. . . . She is utterly dead to the things of the world . . . I do not even know whether in this state she has enough life left to breathe. It seems to me she has not; or at least that if she does breathe, she is unaware of it. . . . The natural action of all her faculties [are suspended]. She neither sees, hears, nor understands (James, 1902/1983, p. 409).[11]

Several key features of this experience jump out. First, Teresa tells us that one reaches this 'orison of unity' by gradually reducing thought and understanding, eventually becoming 'utterly dead' to things, encountering neither sensation, thought nor perceptions. One becomes as simple as possible. Eventually one stops thinking altogether, not able to 'think of any single thing . . . arresting the use of her understanding . . . utterly dead to the things of the world'. And yet, she clearly implies, one remains awake.[12]

Meister Eckhart describes something similar as the *gezucken,* rapture, of St. Paul, his archetype of a transient mystical experience:

> . . . the more completely you are able to draw in your powers to a unity and forget all those things and their images which you have absorbed, and the further you can get from creatures and their images, the nearer you are to this and the readier to receive it. If only you could suddenly be unaware of all things, then you could pass into an oblivion of your own body as St Paul did, . . . In this case . . . memory no longer functioned, nor understanding, nor the senses, nor the powers that should function so as to govern and grace the body . . . In this way a man should flee his senses, turn his powers inward and sink into an oblivion of all things and himself (Walshe, 1982, p. 7).

[10] Forman (1990) offers a rich compendium of reports of the PCE. I have intentionally offered here several reports of this experience that are not included there.

[11] James is quoting from St. Teresa of Avila, *Interior Castle*, in *Oeuvres*, trans. Bouix, vol. 3, pp. 421–4.

[12] The mystic apparently remains conscious throughout. Although Teresa does not explicitly say the mystic is not asleep, I cannot imagine anyone spilling so much ink on merely sleeping or blacking out, or on something like a coma. See below for more explicit statements to this effect.

Like St. Teresa, Eckhart specifically asserts the absence of sensory content ('nor the senses'), as well as mental objects ('devoid of' memory, understanding, senses, etc.). One becomes oblivious of one's 'own body' and 'all things'. In short one becomes 'unaware of all things', i.e. devoid of all mental and sensory content.

The absence of thought and sensation is repeated in the following passage from the Upanishads when describing the state these early Hindu texts call *turiya*, the 'fourth'.

> Verily when a knower has restrained his mind from the external, and the breathing spirit (*prana*) has put to rest objects of sense, thereupon let him continue void of conceptions. Since the living individual (*jiva*) who is named 'breathing spirit' has arisen here from what is not breathing spirit, therefore, verily, let the breathing spirit restrain his breathing spirit in what is called the fourth condition (*turiya*) — Maitri Upanishad 6:19 (Hume, 1931, p. 436).

Here again one has 'put to rest objects of sense', i.e. gradually laid aside all sensations, and continued 'void of conceptions', i.e. not thinking. And yet the Upanishads are insistent that one remains conscious, indeed becomes nothing but consciousness itself. The consciousness that one reaches in *turiya* comes to be known in Samkhya philosophy as '*purusha*', often translated as awareness or consciousness itself, that which 'illuminates' or 'witnesses' thoughts, feelings, and actions.[13] The *purusha* or awareness that one reaches during this experience is described as 'sheer contentless presence (*sasksitva*) . . . that is nonintentional' (Larson, 1979, p. 77).

Here is a report from the present author's own twenty-eight year practice of neo-Advaitan (Hindu-derived) Transcendental Meditation, which suggests the persistence of consciousness throughout such events.

> Sometimes during meditation my thoughts drift away entirely, and I gain a state I would describe as simply being awake. I'm not thinking about anything. I'm not particularly aware of any sensations, I'm not aware of being absorbed in anything in particular, and yet I am quite certain (after the fact) that I haven't been asleep. During it I am simply awake or simply present.
>
> It is odd to describe such an event as being awake or being present, for those terms generally connote an awareness of something or other. But in this experience there is no particular or identifiable object of which I am aware. Yet I am driven to say I am awake for two reasons. First, I emerge with a quiet, intuited certainty that I was continually present, that there was an unbroken continuity of experience or of consciousness throughout the meditation period, even if there seemed to have been periods from which I had no particular memories. I just know that there was some sort of continuity of myself (however we can define that) throughout.[14]

In Buddhism such pure consciousness events are called by several names: *nirodhasamapatti*, or cessation meditation; *samjnavedayitanirodha*, the cessation of sensation and conceptualization; *sunyata*, emptiness; or most famously, *samadhi*, meditation without content (cf. Griffiths, 1990). What is most fascinating about traditional Buddhist explorations of this state is that despite the fact that one is said

[13] These two are not quite equivalent. *Atman*, when seen in its fullest, according to the Upanishads and to Advaita Vedanta, merges with *Brahman*, and thus is experienced as including the object or content of perception. *Purusha*, according to Samkhya, is more an independent monad. It thus remains forever separate from its content. But the two both represent the human awareness, however differently understood.

[14] This account is taken from Forman (1998).

to be utterly devoid of content, according to Yogacara Buddhist theorists one's consciousness is said to *persist* as 'some form of contentless and attributeless consciousness' (Griffiths, 1990, p. 83). That is, despite the fact that one is not aware *of* any specific content or thought, 'something persists' in this contentlessness, and that is consciousness itself: 'I, though abiding in emptiness, am now abiding *in the fullness thereof*' (Nagao, 1978, p. 67). When discussing this possibility that one may abide in the 'fulness' of 'emptiness', Vasubandu states:

> It is perceived as it really is that, when anything does not exist in something, the latter is empty with regard to the former; and further it is understood as it really is that, when, in this place *something remains, it exists here as a real existent.*[15]

In sum, the PCE may be defined as a wakeful but contentless (non-intentional) experience. Though one remains awake and alert, emerging with the clear sense of having had 'an unbroken continuity of experience', one neither thinks, nor perceives nor acts. W.T. Stace (1960):

> Suppose then that we obliterate from consciousness all objects physical or mental. When the self is not engaged in apprehending objects it becomes aware of itself. The self itself emerges. The self, however, when stripped of all psychological contents or objects, is not another thing, or substance, distinct from its contents. It is the bare unity of the manifold of consciousness from which the manifold itself has been obliterated (p. 86).

Now what implications can we draw from the pure consciousness event about the nature of human consciousness?

1. We have a pattern here that is seen across cultures and eras. This, in combination with the reports offered in *The Problem of Pure Consciousness*, suggests that the phenomenon is not an artifact of any one culture but is something closer to an experience that is reasonably common and available in a variety of cultural contexts.[16]
2. Thomas Clark and other defenders of functionalism have suggested that consciousness is *identical to* certain of our information-bearing and behaviour-controlling functions, even going so far as to define it thus (Clark, 1995, p. 241). Others have suggested that consciousness is an artifact or an epiphenomenon of perception, action and thought, and that it arises *only* as a concomitant of these phenomena. Our accounts tend to *dis*confirm this view, which is generally argued on *a priori* grounds. Rather they suggest that consciousness *does* persist even when one has *no* perception, thought or evaluation. This suggests that consciousness should not be defined as merely an epiphenomenon of perception, an evaluative mechanism, or an arbiter of perceptual functions, but rather as something that exists *independently* of them.

[15] Vasubandu commentary on Vs. 1.1 of the Madhyanta Vibhaga, quoted in Nagao (1978). Vasubandu is here wrestling with just the focus that made Yogacara so distinctive and clear. In its focus on the *alayavijnana*, it deals directly with the question of what remains in 'cessation meditation'. Steven Collins (1982) believes this is a mistaken view of the nature of *samadhi*, though unfortunately he never directly confronts such Yogacara texts. For comparable analyses from a Zen perspective, with explicit comparisons with Yogacara, see e.g. Chang Chen Chi (1970), pp. 167–71.

[16] See especially Forman (1990), Part I.

3. Some have suggested that if we can understand how we can tie together perceptions and thoughts — the so called binding problem — we will *ipso facto* understand consciousness.[17] Now, how we bind together perceptions *is* a very interesting question for cognitive psychology, neurobiology and philosophy of mind. But even if we understand how we do tie together perceptions, we will not *necessarily* understand the phenomenon of consciousness *per se* thereby, for according to these mystical accounts, it is more fundamental than a mere binding function.[18] These reports suggest that binding is something done *by* or *for* consciousness, not something that creates consciousness.[19]

4. Our evidence suggests that we should conceptually and linguistically differentiate *merely* being aware or awake from its functional activities. Accordingly, I propose to use the terms as follows: (i) 'awareness' and 'consciousness' for that facet of consciousness which is aware within itself and which may persist even without intentional content; (ii) 'awareness of' and 'consciousness of' to refer to that feature of experience which is cognizant when we are *intentionally* aware of something; and (iii) 'pure awareness' and 'pure consciousness' to refer to awareness without intentional content.[20]

5. Reports of pure consciousness suggest that, despite the absence of mental content, the subjects were somehow aware *that* they remained aware throughout the period of the PCE . Apparently they sensed a continuity of awareness through past and present. If they did, even though there was no content, then they must have somehow *directly* recalled that they had been aware despite the absence of remembered content.[21] This implies human awareness *has* the ability to tie itself together and to know intuitively that it has persisted.[22]

[17] This debate goes back at least to Kant's criticism of Hume's 'associationism' in the eighteenth century. For a discussion of contemporary parallels, see Hardcastle (1994).

[18] If we think in a socio-cultural way here, we might note that our long western worldview, with its roots in the Judaeo-Christian past, in the protestant capitalistic history, and in the history of science, would tend to favour a definition of consciousness in active, masculine, intentional, and 'doing' terminology. Thus consciousness is, in this view, always vectorial, intentionally pointing towards this or that. Such a definition fits how people are expected to act in such a culture. Contemplative traditions and the east, on the other hand, tend to be more open to defining consciousness as *awareness per se*, or just being. In the west we may take these to be too passive, feminine, but they 'fit' the more station-oriented caste and natal-status behavioural patterns. My thanks to Bill Parsons for this observation.

[19] Logically: awareness is a necessary but not sufficient condition for binding; binding is neither a necessary nor sufficient condition for awareness.

[20] This usage preserves Deikman's (1996) separation of awareness from the other senses of 'I', and Chalmers' (1995) similar distinction. My thanks to Jonathan Shear for pointing out that I have reversed Chalmers' terms (he calls awareness in itself 'consciousness' and connects its various functional phenomena with the term 'awareness'). I believe that my usage is in better accord both with ordinary speech and the traditional scholarly use of 'pure consciousness' and 'pure consciousness event'.

[21] See the extended discussion of this possibility in Forman (1998).

[22] Here language fails us. The awareness is not in any sense conscious *of* the passage of time; rather I am suggesting that awareness ties itself together through what an external observer would note as the passage of time.

We may want to say that being conscious seems to entail this sort of direct self-recollection, a presence to oneself that is distinct from the kind of presence we have to perceptions and other intentional content. In this sense, the pure consciousness event tends to affirm Bernard Lonergan's distinction between our conscious presence to intentional objects and our consciousness of consciousness itself:

> There is the presence of the object to the subject, of the spectacle to the spectator; there is also the presence of the subject to himself, and this is not the presence of another object dividing his attention, of another spectacle distracting the spectator; it is presence in, as it were, another dimension, presence concomitant and correlative and opposite to the presence of the object. Objects are present by being attended to but subjects are present as subjects, not by being attended to, but by attending. As the parade of objects marches by, spectators do not have to slip into the parade to be present to themselves; they have to be present to themselves for anything to be present to them (Lonergan, 1967, p. 226, quoted in McCarthy, 1990, p. 234).

In sum, the PCE militates towards a distinction between consciousness or awareness *per se* and its usual binding, relational and culturally-trained processes. It suggests that consciousness is more than its embodied activities.

The dualistic mystical state, the peculiar 'oceanic feeling'

The second mystical phenomenon bears a dualistic pattern. Let us look at a few reports. The first comes from the autobiography of a living American mystic, Bernadette Roberts, middle-aged ex-nun, mother, housewife, and author of *The Experience of No-Self.* She had been in the practice of meditating in a nearby monastery, she tells us, and had often had the experience of complete silence we described above. Previously such experiences had sparked fear in her, perhaps a fear of never returning. But on this particular afternoon, as her meditation was ending,

> once again there was a pervasive silence and once again I waited for the onset of fear to break it up. But this time the fear never came. . . . Within, all was still, silent and motionless. In the stillness, I was not aware of the moment when the fear and tension of waiting had left. Still I continued to wait for a movement not of myself and when no movement came, I simply remained in a great stillness (Roberts, 1984, p. 20).

She became silent inside but, to her surprise, did not emerge from that silence. She stood up and walked out of her chapel, 'like a feather floats in the wind', while her silence continued unabated. No temporary meditative experience, this was a permanent development of that quiet empty interior silence.[23]

> . . . Once outside, I fully expected to return to my ordinary energies and thinking mind, but this day I had a difficult time because I was continually falling back into the great silence (*ibid.*).

She 'remained in a great stillness', driving down the road, talking on the phone, and cutting the carrots for dinner. In fact that inner stillness was never again to leave her.

She experienced her interior silence as her original 'consciousness', by which I understand that she experienced it as devoid of the intellectual self-reflection that generally accompanies experiences. She describes this new state as a continuation of what she had encountered when she was in her meditative silence (PCE); only here she remains fully cognizant of her own silent awareness even while active.

[23] William James' thought that mysticism is 'transient', i.e. short lived, clearly does not capture Bernadette Roberts' experience, nor many of the experiences documented in this section.

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My own previously published autobiographical report of such a state also associates a permanent interior silence with consciousness:

> This began in 1972. I had been practicing meditation for about three years, and had been on a meditation retreat for three and a half months. Over several days something like a series of tubes (neuronal bundles?) running down the back of my neck became, one by one, utterly quiet. This transformation started on the left side and moved to the right. As each one became silent, all the noise and activity inside these little tubes just ceased. There was a kind of a click or a sort of 'zipping' sensation, as the nerve cells or whatever it was became quiet.[24] It was as if there had always been these very faint and unnoticed activity, a background of static, so constant that I had never before noticed it. When each of these tubes became silent, all that noise just ceased entirely. I only recognized the interior noise or activity in these tubes in comparison to the silence that now descended. One by one these tubes became quiet, from left to right. It took a couple of weeks and finally the last one on the right went *zip*, and that was it. It was over.
>
> After the last tube had shifted to this new state, I discovered that a major though subtle shift had occurred. From that moment forward, *I was silent inside*. I don't mean I didn't think, but rather that the feeling inside of me was as if I was entirely empty, a perfect vacuum.[25] Since that time all of my thinking, my sensations, my emotions, etc., have seemed not quite connected to me inside. It was and is as if what was *me*, my consciousness itself, was (and is) now this emptiness. The *silence* was now me, and the thoughts that have gone on inside have not felt quite in contact with what is really 'me,' this empty awareness. 'I' was now silent inside. My thinking has been as if on the outside of this silence without quite contacting it: When I saw, felt or heard something, that perception or thought has been seen by this silent consciousness, but it has not been quite connected to this interior silence.

In this experience the silence is explicitly associated with awareness. It is experienced as 'the I', 'what was really 'me', 'my consciousness itself'. Somehow this area in the back of the head seems to be associated with being aware; as it became silent, a sense of the self or consciousness itself within became more articulated, and was now experienced as silent.

Like Roberts', this shift to an interior silence was permanent.[26] Thus we should call it a state, not a transient experience. I call it the dualistic mystical state (DMS).

Descriptions of a DMS are surprisingly common in the mystical literature. Teresa of Avila writes of such a dualistic state. Speaking of herself in the third person, I beleieve, she writes:

> However numerous were her trials and business worries, the essential part of her soul seemed never to move from [its] dwelling place. So in a sense she felt that her soul was divided . . . Sometimes she would say that it was doing nothing but enjoy[ing] itself in that quietness, while she herself was left with all her trials and occupations so that she could not keep it company (Peers, 1961, p. 211).

She too describes an experience in which, even while working and living, one also maintains a clear sense of the interior awareness, a persisting sense of an unmoving silence at one's core.

[24] Here I am struck by the parallel with the rapid shifting of a physical system as it becomes coherent. Disorganized light just 'shifts' or 'zips' into laser light nearly instantaneously.

[25] Writing this, I think of the parallel between this sense and Bernadette Robert's sense of having lost the usual 'unlocalized sense of herself'.

[26] It is my impression that the awareness of the specific locations within the body is not essential to this transformation.

Meister Eckhart describes something similar, calling it the Birth of the Word In the Soul. One of Eckhart's clearest descriptions is from the treatise 'On Detachment'. It analogizes the two aspects of man with a door and its hinge pin. Like the outward boards of a door, the outward man moves, changes, and acts. The inward man, like the hinge pin, does not move. He — or it — remains uninvolved with activity and does not change at all. This, Eckhart concludes, is the way one should really conduct a life: one should act yet remain inwardly uninvolved. Here is the passage:

> And however much our Lady lamented and whatever other things she said, she was *always in her inmost heart in immovable detachment*. Let us take an analogy of this. A door opens and shuts on a hinge. Now if I compare the outer boards of the door with the outward man, I can compare the hinge with the inward man. When the door opens or closes the outer boards move to and fro, but the hinge *remains immovable* in one place and it is not changed at all as a result. So it is also here . . . (Clark and Skinner, 1958, p. 167; emphasis mine.)

A hinge pin moves on the outside and remains unmoving at its centre. To act and yet remain 'in her inmost heart in immovable detachment' depicts precisely this dualistic life. One acts, yet at an unchanging level within retains a sense of something unmoving. One lives a dichotomous existence. Inside, she experiences an interior silence, outside she acts. Elsewhere Eckhart describes what this is like:

> When the detached heart has the highest aim, it must be towards the Nothing, because in this there is the greatest receptivity. Take a parable from nature: if I want to write on a wax tablet, then no matter how noble the thing is that is [already] written on the tablet, I am none the less vexed because I cannot write on it. If I really want to write I must delete everything that is written on the tablet, and the tablet is never so suitable for writing as when absolutely nothing is written on it. (*ibid.*, p. 168.)

The emphasis in this passage is on the achievement of emptiness within. One has 'deleted' everything inside; one comes to a 'Nothing' inside; the tablet is 'blank'. When one is truly empty within, comes to 'the Nothing,' what goes on 'outside' is of lesser significance, for it is unconnected to the inner 'nothing'. Only once this interior 'Nothing' is established does one truly begin 'acting rightly'. This is highly reminiscent of the empty interior silence achieved by our other reporters.

In sum, in this DMS the subject has a sense, on a permanent or semi-permanent basis, of being in touch with his or her own deepest awareness, experienced as a silence at one's core, even while remaining conscious of the external sensate world. Awareness itself is experienced as silent and as separate from its intentional content.

This dualistic mystical state seems to evolve gradually into another state. First this author's own experience:

> Over the years, this interior silence has slowly changed. Gradually, imperceptibly, this sense of who I am, this silence inside, has grown as if quasi-physically larger. In the beginning it just seemed like I was silent inside. Then this sense of quietness has, as it were *expanded* to permeate my whole body. Some years later, it came to seem no longer even limited to my own body, but even wider, larger than my body. It's such a peculiar thing to describe! It's as if who I am, my very consciousness itself, has become bigger, wider, less localized. By now it's as if I extend some distance beyond my body, as if I'm many feet wide. What is *me* is now this expanse, this silence, that spreads out.

While retaining something of the dualistic character, the sense of the self or awareness itself here seems to have become as if quasi-physically expanded, extending beyond the felt borders of the usual physical frame. It is important to note that exterior

perception has not changed here, only the sense of what consciousness itself is. That will change in the next state.

Freud called this a 'peculiar oceanic feeling', which seems to communicate both the ineffability and the expanded quality of such a sense of consciousness.[27] Yet at this point this sense of an inner expanse does not yet seem to 'touch' or affect the perception of objects.

Being in the middle of an expanse is reminiscent of the well known passage from Walt Whitman. As if having a conversation with his soul, he recalls,

> I mind how once we lay, such a transparent summer morning,
> Swiftly arose and *spread around me* the peace and knowledge that pass all the argument of the earth.[28]

Here the sense of inner silence, the peace, is experienced as part of the world. But note again that Whitman does not suggest that the peace is *within* the world.

The sense seems to be that what one is, one's awareness itself, is experienced as oceanic, unbounded, expanded beyond the limits of the body. Here, I believe, a theist might plausibly associate this silence, that seems to be both inside and yet quasi-physically expansive, with God. If this is true, then St. Teresa's 'Spiritual Marriage' is very much like this one. In it, one is permanently 'married' to the Lord,

> . . . the Lord appears in the centre of the soul . . . He has been pleased to unite Himself with His creature in such a way that they have become like two who cannot be separated from one another: even so He will not separate Himself from her. [In other words, this sense of union is permanent.] The soul remains all the time in [its] centre with its God. . . . When we empty ourselves of all that is creature and rid ourselves of it for the love of God, that same Lord will fill our souls with Himself (Peers, 1961, pp. 213–16).

To be permanently filled within the soul with the Lord may be phenomenologically described as experiencing a sense of some silent but omnipresent, i.e. expansive, 'something' at one's core. If so, this becomes remarkably like the other experiences of expansiveness at one's core that we have seen before. (Once again, the expanse is not described as permeating the world, as it might in the next 'state'.)

This sense of an interiority that is also an expanse is reconfirmed by her disciple St. John of the Cross, who says, 'the soul then feels as if placed in a *vast* and profound solitude, to which no created thing has access, in an *immense* and *boundless* desert'.

In sum, the interior silence at one's core sometimes comes to be experienced as expanded, as if being quasi-physically larger or more spacious than one's body. Now, what might this DMS suggest? It offers several tantalizing hints about consciousness.

1. Human capacity includes more epistemological modalities than is generally imagined. It is clear from these reports that one can be self-reflexively cognizant of one's own awareness more immediately than usual. The contemplative life can lead one to the ability to be aware of one's own awareness *per se* on a permanent or semi-permanent basis. This is not like taking on a *new awareness*. None of our sources describe this as a sense of becoming a different person, or as a *dis*continuity with what they had been. Rather the descriptions are that of becoming more *immediately* cognizant of the awareness they had always enjoyed.

[27] Freud was employing a phrase from his correspondence with Ramakrishna's disciple Romain Rolland. See Parsons (forthcoming).

[28] Walt Whitman, quoted in James (1902/1983) p. 396, no reference.

2. We suggested above that consciousness should not be defined in terms of perceptions, content, or its other functions, for in the DMS awareness continues even when perceptions do not. Here awareness is not only not implicated with thoughts and perceptions, but is *experienced* as entirely different in quality or character — unchanging, without intrinsic form — than its content. It is also experienced as unconnected with its intentional content. Even thoughts do 'not quite contact it'. Awareness itself is experienced as still or silent, perceptions as active and changing. Therefore instead of defining awareness in terms of its content, we should think about awareness and its mental and sensory *functions* as two independent phenomena or processes that somehow interact.

3. The sense of being expanded beyond the borders of one's own body, what Freud called the 'peculiar oceanic feeling', is a very peculiar sense indeed. Yet if we take these wide-spread reports seriously, as I think every open-minded thinker should, what do they suggest?

   The phenomenology, simply put, suggests that consciousness is not limited to the body. Consciousness is encountered as something more like a field than a localized point, a field that transcends the body and yet somehow interacts with it.[29]

   This mystical phenomenon tends to confirm William James' hypothesis in his monumental *Principles of Psychology* that awareness is field-like. This thought was picked up by Peter Fenwick and Chris Clarke in the Mind and Brain Symposium in 1994, that the mind may be non-localized, like a field, and that experience arises from some sort of interplay between non-localized awareness and the localized brain.[30] It is as if these mystical reporters had an *experience* of just the sort of field-like non-locality of awareness these theories hypothesize.

   The heretical suggestion here is not that there is a ghost in the machine, but rather that there is a ghost in and *beyond* the machine! And it is not a ghost that thinks, but a ghost *for which* there is thinking and perception.

4. The experience of awareness as some sort of field points towards the theory that consciousness is more than just the product of the materialistic interactions of brain cells, since it can be understood in two ways. First it may mean that like a magnet, the brain 'produces' a field which extends well beyond its own physical borders. The slow growth of the sense of an experience suggests this.

   Or, conversely, the field-like experience may suggest that awareness somehow transcends individual brain cells and perhaps the entire brain. This suggests a new way to think about the role of the physical body. Brain cells may receive, guide, arbitrate, or canalize an awareness which is somehow transcendental to them. The brain may be more like a receiver or transformer for the field of awareness than its generator: less like a magnet than like a TV receiver.

[29] Of course, that implies that one has some sort of non-sensory sense, the ability to sense one's own expansive presence even though there are no visible mechanisms of sensation. But is that so strange after all? If we can sense our own awareness directly in the pure consciousness event, why shouldn't we be able to sense something of its non-limited character on a more permanent basis?

[30] See Freeman (1994) for a brief report and Clarke (1995) for the full text of Chris Clarke's talk.

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The unitive mystical state

Our last commonly reported mystical experience is a sense of becoming unified with external objects. It is nicely described by the German idealist Malwida von Meysenburg:

> I was alone upon the seashore . . . I felt that I . . . return[ed] from the solitude of individuation into the consciousness of *unity with all that is*, [that I knelt] down as one that passes away, and [rose] up as one imperishable. Earth, heaven, and sea *resounded as in one vast world encircling* harmony. . . . I *felt myself one* with them . . . (von Meysenburg, 1900; emphasis mine).

The keynote of Malwida's experience is that in some sort of immediate or intuitive manner she sensed that she was connected with the things of the world, as if she was a part of them and they part of her. It is as if the membranes of her experienced self became semi-permeable, and she flowed in, with or perhaps through her environment.

A similar experience is described in Starbuck's 19th century collection of experience reports. Here again we see a sense of unity with the things of the world.

> . . . something in myself made me feel *myself a part of something bigger* than I . . . I *felt myself one with* the grass, the trees, birds, insects, everything in nature. I exulted in the mere fact of existence, of being apart of it all, the drizzling rain, the shadows of the clouds, the tree-trunks and so on.

The author goes on to say that after this experience he constantly sought these experiences of the unity between self and object again, but they only came periodically. This implies that for him they were temporary phenomena, lasting only a few minutes or hours.

This sense of the unity between self and object, the absence of the usual lines between things, is clearly reminiscent of Plotinus's *First Ennead* (8:1).

> He who has allowed the beauty of that world to penetrate his soul goes away no longer a mere observer. For the object perceived and the perceiving soul are *no longer two* things separated from one another, but the perceiving soul has [now] within itself the perceived object (quoted in Otto, 1930, p. 67).

Again we have a lack of boundaries between consciousness and object. It is not clear from this passage if Plotinus is describing a transient or a permanent experience. Yet some reporters clearly tell us that such an experience can be constant. Though it is often hard to distinguish biography from mythology, Buddhist descriptions of Sakyamuni Buddha's life clearly imply that his Nirvana was a *permanent* change in epistemological structure. Similarly the Hindu term for an enlightened one, *jivan-mukti* (enlightened in active life), clearly suggests that this experience can be permanent.

Notice how different these reports are from our DMS descriptions of an inner expanse. There we saw no change in the relationship between the subject and the perceived world. Here 'the object perceived and the perceiving soul' are now united. 'I felt myself one with the grass, the trees, birds, insects, everything in nature.'

One of the clearer descriptions of this state comes from Krishnamurti, who wrote of his his first experience of this sort, in August, 1922:

> On the first day while I was in that state and more conscious of the things around me, I had the first most extraordinary experience. There was a man mending the road; that man was myself; the pickax he held was myself; the very stone which he was breaking up was a part of me; the tender blade of grass was my very being, and the tree beside the man was myself. I also could feel and think like the roadmender and I could feel the wind passing through the tree, and the little ant on the blade of grass I could feel. The birds, the dust and the very noise were a part of me. Just then there was a car passing by at some distance; I was the driver, the engine, and the tires; as the car went further away from me, I was going away from myself. I was in everything, or rather everything was in me, inanimate and animate, the mountain, the worm and all breathing things. All day long I remained in this happy condition.

Perhaps the most unmistakable assertion that these shifts can be permanent comes from Bernadette Roberts. Sometime after her initial transformation, she had what is clearly a development *on* her earlier dualistic sense of an expanded consciousness. She writes:

> I was standing on [a] windy hillside looking down over the ocean when a seagull came into view, gliding, dipping, playing with the wind. I watched it as I'd never watched anything before in my life. I almost seemed to be mesmerized; it was as if I was watching myself flying, for there was not the usual division between us. Yet, something more was there than just a lack of separateness, 'something' truly beautiful and unknowable. Finally I turned my eyes to the pine-covered hills behind the monastery and still, there was no division, only something 'there' that was flowing with and through every vista and particular object of vision. . . . What I had [originally] taken as a trick of the mind *was to become a permanent way of seeing and knowing* (Roberts, 1984, p. 30; italics mine).

She describes this 'something there' that flowed with and through everything, including her own self, as 'that into which all separateness dissolves.' She concludes with an emphatic assertion: 'I was never to revert back to the usual relative way of seeing separateness or individuality.' Again we have a state, not a transient episode.

We could multiply these examples endlessly. This unitive mystical state (UMS), either temporary or permanent, is a very common mystical phenomenon. It is clearly an evolution of the previous sense. First one continues to sense that one's awareness is expansive, field-like, and that the self is experienced as larger, expanded beyond the usual boundaries. One feels oneself to be 'a part of something bigger', which is to say, senses a lack of borders or a commonality between oneself and this expanse. Indeed, in Bernadette Roberts' case, her sense of 'something there' *followed* and was an evolution of her initial dualistic mystical state. But now this perceived expansion of the self is experienced as none other than, permeating with and through, the things of the world. One's boundaries become as if permeable, connected with the objects of the world. The expanded self seems to be experienced as of the same metaphysical level, or of the same 'stuff', as the world. Despite the grammatical peculiarities, 'what I am *is* the seagull, and what the seagull is, *I* am'.

From this fascinating phenomenon we may note several implications for our understanding of consciousness.

1. The perceived 'spaciousness' of awareness suggests, I said above, that consciousness is like a field. These unitive experiences reaffirm this implication and suggest that such a field may not only transcend our own bodily limits, but somehow may interpenetrate or connect both self and external objects. This is of course strikingly parallel to the physical energy fields and/or the quantum vacuum field said to reside at the basis of matter, for these too are both immanent within and also transcendent to any particular expression, a parallel that Fritjof Capra, Lawrence Domash and others have been quick to point out.

2. The perception of unity holds out the possibility that the field of awareness is common to all objects, and however implausibly, among all human beings as well. It indicates that my own consciousness may be somehow connected to a tree, the stars, a drizzle or a blade of grass and, paradoxically, to yours. Thus these unitive experiences point towards something like a primitive animism, Leibnitz's panspsychism and Griffin's suggestion of a pan-experientialism, that experience or some sort of consciousness may be 'an ingredient throughout the universe, permeating all levels of being'. All this, however, opens up another Pandora's box of peculiar questions: most obviously what might the consciousness be of a dog, flower, or even a stone? Does the claim of a perceived unity merely point to some ground of being, and not a consciousness that is in any sense self-reflective like our own consciousness? Or if you and I share consciousness, can I experience what you do? If not, why not?

3. Not everyone who meditates encounters these sorts of unitive experiences. This suggests that some may be genetically or temperamentally predisposed to mystical ability; borrowing from Weber, the 'mystically musical'.

   One might suggest that the mystic's awareness is categorically different than other peoples', i.e. that it is connected to the world in an ontologically deep way that the rest of ours is not. I find this unconvincing, since every mystic I have read says he or she began as an 'ordinary', i.e. non-mystical, person and only came to realize something of what he or she 'had always been'. Whichever explanation we opt for, however, it is clear that there is some ability the mystics have been able to develop — through meditation or whatever — that most of us have not.

Conclusions

Our three modalities of mystical experiences point clearly towards a distinction between awareness *per se* and the ordinary functional processes of sensation, perception and thought. They suggest that awareness is not *constructed* out of the material processes of perception or perhaps the brain, but rather they suggest a distinction and / or interaction between consciousness and the brain. Furthermore, they suggest that awareness may have a non-localized, quasi-spatial character, much like a field. Finally they tend to suggest that this field may be transcendental to any one person or entity.

I want to end by restating my earlier caveat. Phenomenology is not science. There can be many ways to explain any experience, mystical or otherwise, and we should explore all of them. But in the absence of compelling reasons to deny the suggestions of their reports, we would be wise to seriously examine the direction towards which the finger of mysticism points. If the validity of knowledge in the universities is indeed governed, as we like to claim, by the tests of evidence, openness and clarity, then we should not be too quick to throw out the baby swimming in the bathwater of mysticism.

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